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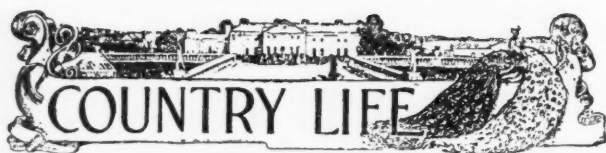
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MISS ALICE HUGHES,

H.R.H. PRINCESS STEPHANIE: COUNTESS LONYAY.

52, Gower Street.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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THE DIFFICULTIES OF POULTRY-FARMING

BEFORE saying a word on this subject, it may be well to assure Mr. Tegetmeier and those who agree with him that we have not the slightest intention of advocating poultry-farming as a profession. Its place is subsidiary to some other means of earning a livelihood, and even when that is taken for granted, it will be found that there are in the way difficulties of no mean order. In theory, hens are extremely easy to manage, but in practice they are found to be crammed with peculiarities. If under-fed, they grow scraggy, and even in summer lay irregularly, while in winter they will not produce eggs at all. But very much the same thing happens if they are over-fed. The result is that in summer they go broody, and each individual hen, instead of laying eggs, as is her duty, wants to become a mother, and has an insane desire to hatch out a brood of chickens. In winter, too, an over-dose of food, frequently repeated—far from helping the hens to lay—seems to turn them away from it. Yet the whole problem is the production of eggs in winter. Anybody who keeps a fairly good head of poultry is able to get at least a moderate number of eggs during the spring and summer months, when the hens are naturally inclined to lay; but, unfortunately, at that time of the year everybody else's hens are of the same coming-on disposition, and the result is that eggs, like minor poetry, are a drug in the market. No doubt they can be preserved. There are a number of ingenious processes by which eggs, when they are plentifully produced, may be laid away against the time when they are scarce, but a fair trial of the various methods advocated will soon lead to the conclusion that if eggs have been kept for months in the very best manner yet invented, they cannot be truthfully described as equal to fresh eggs. They are good enough for general purposes, but they are not suitable for boiling for breakfast. The sad conclusion is, therefore, inevitable, that if you wish to have eggs that are really fresh for breakfast in mid-winter, the only certain means of accomplishing this is by inducing the hens to lay them in mid-winter.

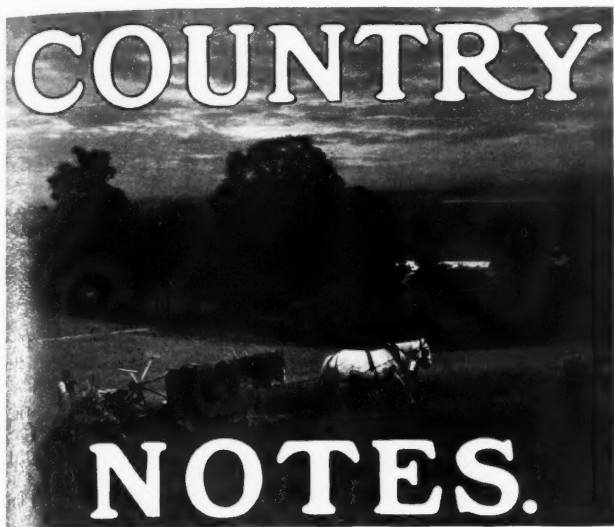
How to go about the attainment of this result is one of the first questions that a young poultryman will have to solve. It is during the winter months that he will receive for his eggs a price that makes it worth his while to produce them, that is, if he shows some common-sense in the selection of feed. Very often

in winter it is quite possible so to feed poultry that the eggs will cost much more to produce than to buy. There was not much exaggeration in the confession of the amateur that each fresh egg his hens produced in winter cost him half-a-crown. The first requisite in hens that are to lay during the winter is that they should be of suitable age. As a rule pullets are best for the purpose, and experience goes to show that a frequent change in the population of the poultry-yard is good both for health and profit. It is the very early chicken that is most likely to lay in the autumn and winter, and to expect either old hens or birds that were hatched late in the season to do so is to court disappointment. In the next place, it will be found that, however well disposed towards laying the pullet may be, she will not do so unless she be physically comfortable. If allowed to wander about in the morning cackling for food and shivering with cold, it need not be thought that she will lay eggs in the afternoon; therefore the first thing is to cook a soft mess for her breakfast. Where large quantities of chickens are not kept, the refuse of a house, such as potatoes, crumbs, stale bread, and the like, can be most advantageously utilised for feeding the chickens, and if a quantity of hot water be poured over this in the morning it will have the effect of making the hen feel happy, while a feed of hard corn at night will keep them equally contented upon their perches. But the very common practice of feeding the birds at night with maize is not to be advocated, because this grain forms an inward fat that prevents the bird from laying. Further than that, a principle not to be overlooked is that hens do not like to be either damp or cold. In a wet season they never produce as many eggs as in a dry and sunny one, and a damp clay soil, as compared with one that is dry and porous, has an equally detrimental effect. If confined, therefore, the run of the birds should be well sprinkled with ashes, or some other dry material; in fact, though it may look like coddling, they will be none the worse for having a roof over their run. Certainly, if allowed to spend the day among the puddles of rain that are formed during the winter-time, they are more likely to develop the various kinds of disease to which hens are subject than to astonish the housewife by the number of eggs in their boxes in the morning. If, therefore, she will attend to the points we have indicated, she may out of her eggs make enough to clothe the children, and buy herself a new bonnet occasionally. If she set her heart upon doing more than this, and trying to earn a livelihood out of chickens, it would be necessary for her to take to the fattening process, because, undoubtedly, in that lies the best prospect of making a decent income.

But here again much depends upon circumstances. An arable farmer who grows a considerable quantity of wheat and other cereals may fatten sufficiently for the market a number of chickens at little or no cost. He is bound to have a certain quantity of corn that can be changed into chicken as advantageously as anything else. Above all, he has his stubbles, and, if he have a certain amount of ingenuity, there are many boxes of one kind or another about the farm that can easily be put on wheels and made to serve as temporary chicken-houses. We say put on wheels, because thus it is so much easier to take them out to the fields and change them from one place to another. Here the chickens will thrive excellently, since, in the first place, they have a change to entirely clean ground, and, secondly, they can pick up the blown grains that otherwise would have gone to the fowls of the air. These facts look elementary, but everybody interested in the question knows that farmers do not take nearly as much advantage as they ought to of their opportunities of feeding chickens. We are still, however, only in the region of the subsidiary income. If a considerable return is demanded from chickens, fattening and cramming must be done on a large scale and with proper appliances. Moreover, to carry it out successfully it is necessary to encourage the cottage people round about to do the business of rearing. In many places the highway offers all the conveniences they want for this purpose, and in many parts of the country the hen is taken to the grassy margin of the high road and kept in a kind of cage, while the little chicks can run out and in and enjoy themselves among the grass and clover. It is a most inexpensive way of breeding chickens, and would be largely pursued if a market could be found for them when they were about three months old, at which time it would pay the peasant breeder to sell them on very reasonable terms to the fatterer or crammer, who at present has to rely upon Ireland for the young birds he operates upon. That is the only means of making a considerable sum of money out of fowls.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of H.R.H. Princess Stéphanie of Belgium, married in 1881 to the Crown Prince of Austria, whose melancholy death occurred in 1889. Her Royal Highness was married on March 22nd, 1900, to Elemér Count Lónyay de Nagy-Lónya.



SO far the autumn of 1905 has been one of singular beauty, and the trees have gone through their annual transformation with a deliberation that added to the beauty which they present. But in the middle of October there came some nights of keen frost, which greatly expedited the work of decay. On some mornings the ice in various pools was quite thick, and, as a result, the tinted leaves could be seen falling in showers even when no wind was blowing. The first blast that occurs now will strip the woodlands bare. Everything else is beginning to point to the approach of winter; hedges are becoming ragged as they lose their foliage, the fields are looking bare and cold, especially those that have been ploughed and sown with winter wheat, though here and there a thatched crop serves as a reminiscence of summer. The autumn has been an extremely favourable one for autumn operations, and though the price of wheat continues to show a downward tendency, agriculturists, as a rule, are in good heart. They think that the signs of the times are on the whole better for them just now than they have been.

The usual memorandum issued by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade is more encouraging than some of those which have preceded it, the chief statement being that employment in September was better than in August. The pig iron, iron and steel, and tinplate industries are all showing increased signs of activity, and a favourable report is given of engineering, woollen, worsted, linen, hosiery, leather, printing, and bookbinding. When a comparison is made between this year and last year a notable improvement is discovered in the metal, engineering, ship-building, and textile industries. Where trade is still somewhat unsatisfactory is in coal-mining and house-building. The former, it is evident, must come into activity very soon, as the demand for ironwork has shown a considerable increase since the time when the figures of the Board of Trade were prepared. House-building will probably have to wait a little longer. It is a trade that naturally falls off in bad times, especially as the tendency has been in recent years to over-build in towns. We are referring, of course, to the better class of houses, which are the most profitable to the contractor. When a time of stagnant trade comes house-building is one of the first industries to feel the effect; but as soon as things get better, we may expect that it, too, will begin to look up. The number of unemployed, it is satisfactory to know, is less than the number of those who were out of work this time last year, and a very great improvement on 1903. The facts cited, to say the least, do not contradict the sanguine prophecy of those who foresee an early revival of commercial activity.

The death of Dr. Ellicott removes one who, until a year ago, had filled for an almost unprecedented period one of the most important bishoprics in the kingdom. He was Bishop of Gloucester for forty-two years, and during that time managed the affairs of the diocese with a breadth of sympathy and unaffected piety and a quiet wisdom that might serve as models for others in a similar position. Probably he owed length of days to the fact that he mingled recreation prudently with hard work, for which he was famous. He was an Alpine climber, and fond of all sorts of outdoor exercises, while within doors he had a great love for the game of billiards, at which he was a moderately expert player. All his amusements, however, were kept in control and subordinated to the great purpose of his life—a fact which did not prevent him from being made at one time the subject of a jest. For example, he was playing billiards at a famous country house, not very far from Gloucester, with a peer who is now

dead, but who in his lifetime was celebrated for his practical jokes. The contest had reached its most interesting point, when the clock struck twelve, and the Bishop somewhat reluctantly laid down his cue, saying, "It is Sunday morning; we must stop." "Oh, never mind, Bishop," said his host, with a laugh; "it makes no difference now, as I put back the clock for an hour." Dr. Ellicott used to tell the story with his own pleasant sense of humour.

The extent to which Sir Henry Irving dignified the profession to which he belonged has been brought out in striking manner by the events that followed his sudden and much-regretted death. Messages of condolence have been sent from the most distinguished people in the land, from the King downwards, and—crowning honour of all—Westminster Abbey has opened her gates to receive his body, thus acknowledging that an actor who was super-eminent in his calling may fitly take his place beside the illustrious dead of England. The authorities at Westminster in the past, both in regard to their rejections and admissions, have at different times laid themselves open to adverse criticism; but few there are who will question the wisdom of the Dean's decision on the present occasion. We have but to remember what the histrionic calling was before the appearance of Irving: how the actor was still regarded as a vagabond, and how the profession was at best the home only of "expatriated spiritualisms," to use Carlyle's phrase. But Henry Irving possessed the first requisite of an artist—a consciousness of the dignity and greatness of his own calling, and by his unflagging and concentrated efforts he raised the status of all those who were his fellow-workers, and made the vocation one wherein a legitimate ambition might find free scope. We say nothing here of the intellect and ability that he brought to bear on his interpretation of character, though without these his other aspirations would have been in vain; but the whole army of actors and actresses owe him a deep debt of gratitude for his unfailing attention to their highest interests. He is one of a small group belonging to his profession who sleep in Westminster, but his worthiness of the honour is beyond cavil.

PEACE.

There is peace on the sea to-night
Thought the fish in the white wave:
There is peace among the stars to-night
Thought the sleeper in the grave.
There is peace in my heart to-night,
Sighed Love beneath his breath:
For God dreamed in the silence of His might
Amid the earthquakes of death.

FIONA MACLEOD.

The cheap cottages exhibition, although it has led to a considerable amount of more or less acrimonious controversy, has been sufficiently successful to set others following the example of those laid down. The controllers of the Fleetwood Estate, near Blackpool, have for some time been considering the foundation of a garden city, and as a preliminary have decided to hold an exhibition of cheap cottages there, with special reference to the needs of the agricultural labourer, the small holder, and the week-ender. The cottages put up for competition are to be permanent, and arrangements will be made beforehand for building them in such a manner as to form a village. Of course, this will necessitate an arrangement of some kind or other with the builders, as otherwise the speculation would not be a paying one for them. An inducement for competitors to come over, not only will money prizes be offered, but also free plots of land; it is hoped that the value of these will come to something between £500 and £1,000. The idea is quite a promising one, and we have to remember that, even when blunders are made, it is through experiments such as these that a way is likely to be found out of the difficulty at last.

A point well worth the attention of all who are endeavouring to make village life more attractive to village populations was brought up at the Church Congress by the Bishop of Derby, who uttered a plea for the resuscitation and encouragement of the old-fashioned village band. Though the disappearance of the church musicians of the old type deprived the village bands of a large proportion of their strength, they have by no means disappeared in most rural neighbourhoods, and where they exist they undoubtedly supply an interest and occupation of precisely the kind that is wanted. Their appearance at village fêtes and country flower shows is always intensely popular, and they and their members enjoy no small prestige. At present bands of this kind are chiefly found in villages where, owing to mining, manufactures, or railways, the population has not shared in the general rural decrease, and what is required is to encourage their formation in villages of the purely agricultural type. The remedy may appear a trivial one in comparison with the disease,

but the disease is one which is more likely to be dealt with successfully by steady endeavour in a number of collateral ways than by any one heroic attempt at cure.

The Port of London is the historic foundation-stone of British commercial dominion, and widespread interest will be felt in the report just published by the deputation appointed by the Thames Conservancy Board to investigate the harbour, dock, and quay accommodation at Rotterdam and Antwerp, which have in recent years shown themselves such formidable rivals. In the last dozen years the increase of tonnage entering both these ports has been considerably greater than in the Port of London. In the words of the report, whereas London was formerly a great "distributing and collecting port, and to a large extent the goods exchange of Europe," now to a greater and greater extent the huge ocean-going steamers unlade at the two Low Country ports, and the merchandise for England is transhipped in smaller vessels. This unwelcome change is due to the Dutch and Belgian authorities (to say nothing of the Germans at Hamburg) having been sufficiently far-sighted and enterprising to provide for the continually-increasing size of ocean steamers by deepening the channels of the Maas and Scheldt, and enormously enlarging the accommodation at the docks and wharves.

The popularity of the Thames steamer as a means of transit has been conclusively proved by the record of the London County Council's flotilla during the past three months, since it started in July. The steamers have carried 2,763,126 passengers, and taken more than £21,000 in fares, while these figures are independent of a smaller, but still very considerable, total supplied by the fleet of the Thames Steamboat Company. The amount of expenses incurred seems still to be lacking in published form, so that the commercial success of the undertaking can only be guessed at; but it looks as though there should be no great difficulty in running a paying service for the future, during the summer months, at any rate. The receipts for the last week in September were, however, less than a quarter of the amount taken during the second week in August, and it is clear that the steamers must be regarded as mainly a fair-weather means of transit.

The experiment of the Rhodes Scholarships at Oxford has now reached an interesting stage. At the opening of the academic year another batch of students entered into residence on the Rhodes foundation. There were altogether sixty-seven of them, of whom five are Germans and the remainder drawn from the principal Colonies and the United States. When the new arrivals are added to those who came in 1903, the whole list of Rhodes scholars in residence will be 147, and as the scheme matures this total ought to be increased to close on 200, where it should remain as long as those countries entitled to do so continue to send students. It is too early as yet to speak of the broad results that are likely to flow from the foundation; but there can be no doubt that those who come to pursue their studies under such attractive circumstances in Oxford, ought to acquire such an understanding of British institutions as could not be arrived at elsewhere. The Vice-Chancellor of the University in his annual address took occasion to refer to the preliminary success of the scheme, and as far as we can see it promises well for the future. It is particularly desirable that a percentage of Teutonic students should have a thorough understanding of this country and its history—subjects which are continually distorted in the text-books of the German schools.

During the past fortnight a chess match of unusual interest has been going on. It was between the young American player, Mr. Marshall, and that well-known winner of international tournaments, Dr. Tarrasch of Nuremberg. Mr. Marshall is a young player of the imaginative kind, who seemed at one time likely to don the mantle of the great Paul Morphy, which had been worn for a little while by Mr. Pillsbury, whose dash, energy, and brilliance were marked features of his play. He won many brilliant victories, especially that in which he defeated the famous French champion, Monsieur Janowski. Dr. Tarrasch is the exponent of a very different style of chess, most correct in style, believing in the accumulation of small advantages, and probably he is the most accurate analyst that ever lived. It was the old story of Napoleon and Wellington reduced to miniature and put on the chess-board, and, as occurred in the great theatre of life, soundness and common-sense proved too much for dash and brilliance, the final scores being Tarrasch eight wins, Marshall one win and eight draws. A fact that lent additional interest to the contest was that it forms a prelude to a battle of giants in which the victor will be opposed to Dr. Lasker.

We are sorry to hear from the firm of Charles Heidsieck that the champagne vintage of the present season, which is now nearly over, has not been a satisfactory one, and that the

prospects of a fine wine seem out of the question. The outlook in the early part of the year was excellent, the grapes doing well under the exceptional heat of July; but in the middle of that month and during part of August several storms occurred, bringing heavy hail with them, and much damage was caused. The average temperature during the period was low, and the weather very changeable, both during the time to which we have alluded and in September. Thus, though the gathering of the grapes commenced somewhat early—on September 25th—it was under unfortunate conditions, the weather being wet and cold. The general result is that a very light wine is expected from the vintage of 1905. Last year's vintage, however, is developing very well, and the vintage of 1900—a memorable one—is being shipped, and is fulfilling all the expectations formed of it.

Every year that passes sees an increasing tendency on the part of the holiday-keepers who throng the watering-places in the autumn to prolong the holiday season beyond what used to be the statutory months of August and September, and to carry it well on into, and even to the end of, October. Only a few years ago, even, "summer visitors," as it is the custom to call them, used to vanish from these places with one accord at the end of September like ghosts at the crowing of the cock. The great majority do so now, but a fairly large percentage remains for weeks longer. It is an excellent change of habit from the point of view of the hotel and lodging-house keepers in these watering-places, and it must be good, too, for the visitors themselves to prolong a stay in surroundings that are likely to be more healthful than those at home in the cities. The change is a practical recognition of the fact that the autumnal months generally are pleasant and mild, especially in Scotland. In addition to this, people are more and more getting into the way of resorting to these seaside places for a week or so at Christmas-tide, so that on the whole the season of the hotel-keeper is not so brief as it used to be. It is an argument that might be used to induce him to lower his prices.

THE PASSING TRAIN.

With shriek and roar the train goes by;
Windows aflash reflect the sky.
A young lad, by the stream below,
Tutus, eager-eyed to watch it go.
Wistful, he sighs, "Might I go too
To London, where the dreams come true."
And, from the train, a worn man sees
The silent valley's fields and trees.
"Happy were he who here might dwell,
Where God has dowered all things well."
The train goes on. Yet, for a space,
Those two have seen joy face to face.
Youth cries for life. Age deems the best
Of all God's gifts, a dreamless rest.

F. W. SAUNDERSON.

The news that the town of Leicester is threatened with a water famine is rather ominous. The reservoirs are said to be falling still, in spite of a diminution in the supply given to the town. A scheme is on foot under which Leicester may hope to have an ample supply in the future, although at considerable cost to the rates; but it is calculated that the engineering works for the conveyance of this supply will not be complete for six years. The famine which threatens Leicester is not likely to spare other towns in which the margin between the demand and the supply of water is a narrow one. Possibly it may be well that they should be forewarned in time. It is not for many a week yet that we may expect that "breaking of the springs" which is looked forward to so eagerly in those parts of the country which know what it is to be short of water.

The account of a recent trip of the Lebaudy airship, performed in the first instance for the purpose of inspecting certain military defences between Nancy and Toul, is of considerable interest, as showing how perfectly it is under control, and with what sureness its projected voyages can be accomplished. We are not informed of the force and direction of the wind, and may, perhaps, infer that calm weather prevailed. The airship was afloat for three hours all but five minutes, and in that space of time, starting from the Aerostatic Park, it visited the fort of Vondreville, traversed the forest of Haye, and proceeded to Nancy, visiting all the outposts on the way. After hovering for a while over the Blandan Barracks at Nancy, it returned to Toul, making the return journey at the rate of 38 kilometres an hour, and descended safely in front of its shed. Presuming the correctness of the account, which there is no ostensible reason for doubting, it would seem as if this was the most effective performance of a navigable balloon of which we have any record, and goes far to establish as a proved fact the practical utility of the airship. It is of special interest as coinciding with the first session of the International Aeronautical Conference in Paris.

LORD GERARD'S LONGHORNS.

THE illustrations which we offer to-day afford a gratifying proof of the revival of a breed of cattle which, although common and celebrated during the latter part of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries, had considerably fallen out of fashion in the eighties, so that at one time total extinction was feared for it. Yet the longhorn is so closely connected with the name of Bakewell, and with Dishley—where he effected so many improvements in English cattle—that even historically speaking it would have been a pity to see them vanish altogether from the English shows. Far from doing this, a new lease of life seems to have been taken by the breed, and the excellent herd from which these pictures come numbers no fewer than fifty.

Lord Gerard started his herd of longhorns at Eastwell Park in 1903, and it needs no saying that the cattle have done well on its undulating and beautifully-wooded pastures. The foundation cow of this herd was Black Eyed Susan, a first prize winner at the famous Warwickshire show, from which dates the modern revival of the breed. The bull at present in service is Westmeath Squire, who won the first prize at Leicester in



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THE FATHER OF THE HERD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

1904, and was bred in Ireland by the Earl of Westmeath. A daughter of Black Eyed Susan, Black Eyed Susan II., was purchased at the same time as her dam, and became the champion, winning the first prizes at both the Royal and the Warwickshire shows. A visit was then paid to the herd at Stowe House, Bucks, where three or four cows of the old strain were purchased, including Red Rose V. and others. The young brindle bull Eastwell Earl, who was second at the Royal in 1905, was bred from one of the Stowe cows, viz., Countess of Stowe. Lord Gerard, on finding the longhorns were becoming extremely popular among his Kentish tenants, determined to increase his herd as rapidly as possible, and a visit was paid to the well-known herd of Mrs.

Cheape at Bentley Manor, Worcestershire, whose longhorns were described and illustrated in our pages on August 20th, 1904. Among those acquired by Lord Gerard was Dido, champion at the Royal in 1904, a beautiful example of the breed, with an ideal head and perfect horns; Woodcote Empress and Bentley Susan were also purchased at the same time. The fine grizzle and white heifer, Lady Emily, was bought in Cumberland as a



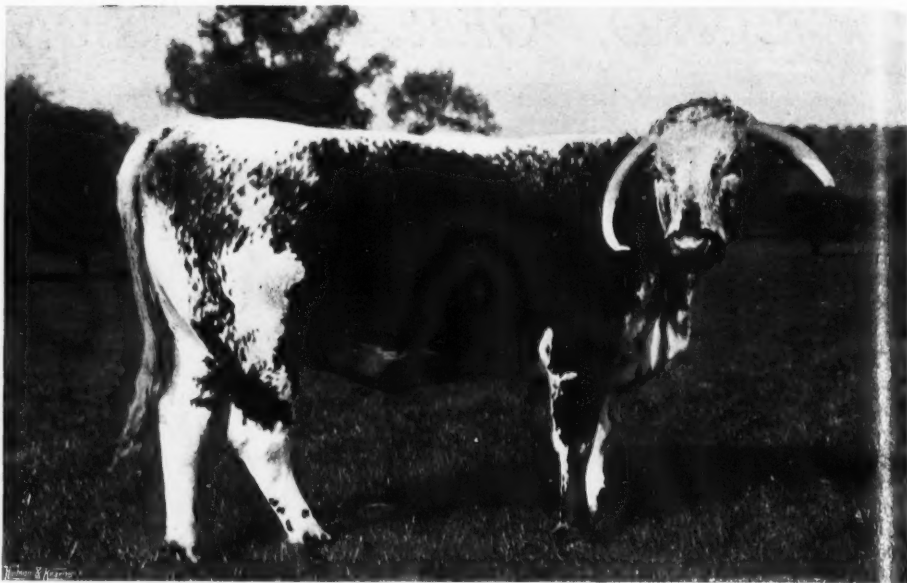
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LADY EMILY AND BENTLEY SUSAN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

yearling, and was not brought out until this year, when she proved to be the champion heifer of her breed. Lord Gerard has been exhibiting now for about two years, and has never sent to any show without winning at least one first prize—a fact which speaks for itself. He is, as is well known, an agriculturist with experimental tendencies, and is at present engaged in making many interesting crosses between longhorns and other breeds. West Highland heifers, for example, have been sent to a longhorn bull, and so have Herefords and shorthorns. It is yet too early to say what the crosses will produce, but the results are looked forward to with great interest by the tenants and graziers of the South. The stock, however, as far as can be judged, are promising well, and in the course of the next twelve months it ought to be possible to form a fair opinion of their merits. It may be mentioned here that Lord Gerard favours the system of letting the bull run with the cows, which in his case seems to work very well, although the objections to it are pretty well understood.

His success with the breed itself must cause many people to recall the history of longhorns, with a view to the advisability



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THE CHAMPION HEIFER, 1905.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Somerset, and in buying the entire herd of Hernfield he became the owner of a fine stock. About the same time the Hon.

E. A. FitzRoy of West Haddon, Northamptonshire, bought some good longhorns. It was mainly due to the exertions of these three breeders that the Royal Agricultural Society of England was induced to open classes for their inclusion, and longhorns were well represented at the Birmingham show in 1898. Indeed, the success at Birmingham led to a meeting in the following May, which resulted in the formation of a new society, and the publication of the Herd Book of Pure Bred Longhorn Cattle, to which we are indebted for many of these particulars.

It cannot be said that farmers generally have yet come to realise the excellent qualities which the longhorn has developed under proper treatment. In the Herd Book it is stated frankly that the longhorn ranks as a general-purpose animal, and, therefore, it would not appeal to those who go in strongly for specialisation, and think that the best type of milk cow is one that will have no interest for the butcher. The official description is as follows:

"In shape the best animals of the breed are long and low, with wide and level backs, well-sprung ribs, and their hides, which are mellow



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WESTMEATH SQUIRE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of keeping them. After Bakewell's time, as it is scarcely necessary to say, the breed fell somewhat out of favour, not because of any demerit on its part, but on account of the extreme popularity which the shorthorn then attained. At the great show at Windsor in 1889 there were only eleven entries of longhorns, though it was significant that these came from districts very remote from each other, such as North Wales, the county of Somerset, and the Midlands. The materials for reviving the breed were therefore still available, and its admirers pulled themselves together for a strong effort. Among those who took a leading part may be mentioned the name of Mr. W. H. Sales of Atherstone, who laid the foundation of his herd by purchasing a cow and a heifer from that of the late Mr. Thomas Satchwell, of Hernfield, Knowle, Warwickshire, to which later on were added specimens from the very fine and pure herd belonging to Mr. W. S. Shaw of Fradley, near Lichfield. Mr. H. Jasper Selwyn of Little Woodcote, Kenilworth, also took up the breed of longhorns by making a number of judicious purchases from the scattered remnants of the herds of Dorset and



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BLACK EYED SUSAN

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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EASTWELL EARL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to the touch, are covered with a coat of hair of great thickness and silky texture, though in the winter-time standing somewhat roughly. This gives them the ability to withstand practically any reasonable degree of cold and wet. In color there is room for diversity of taste, as though the white line along the back, with a white patch or mark on the thigh, is looked upon as strictly orthodox, occasionally purely bred animals are found entirely self-colored, whilst in others the side of the body may be either red, brindled, a grizzled roan, or any of these colors intermixed with small white specks or flakes, and be perfectly orthodox in every way. The color most admired by many breeders, and certainly a very hardy one, is the dark brindled with rather a blueish tint, and the white line along the back; animals of this color are very be useful, their coats when in health and condition being covered with a bloom almost resembling that upon ripe grapes, and with the bluish hue are most attractive. The horns must be long, and may grow in any possible shape, some striking straight at right angles with the poll, others curving round and meeting even under the jaws, or the horns may twist in varied shapes, as they frequently do, and with graceful turnings give the animal a most picturesque appearance. It is on this account that the breed has generally been in request as an ornament to so many of the stately homes that adorn the Midland Counties of England. In the females of the breed, too, the udder should be square, and the teats good size without coarseness. In both sexes the Long Horn is usually



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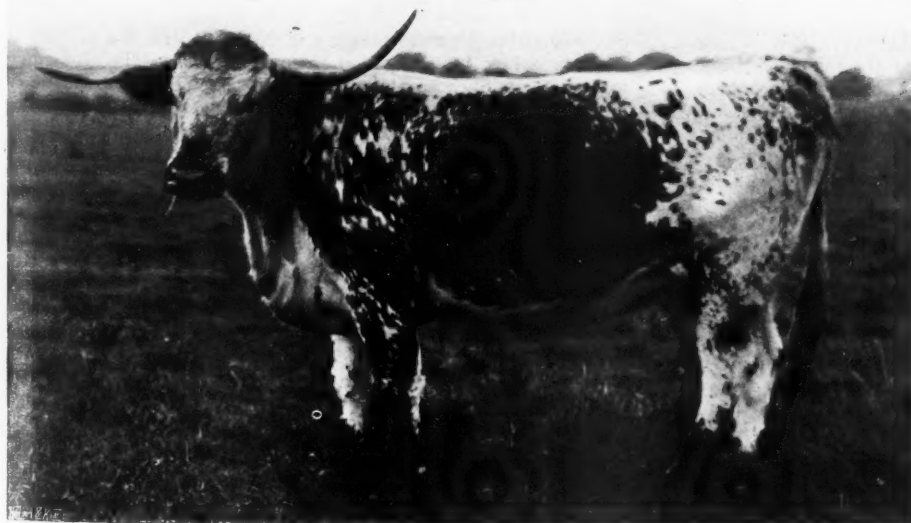
"COUNTRY LIFE."

three of which realised three years old. Thus

£46, £44, and £37 respectively, at the milk-giving and beef-producing qualities are demonstrated; but another point is dwelt upon by the writer of the official account, which is that "The hardy character of the cows enables them to be carried through the winter . . . at a minimum cost, either in food or labour, as they much prefer the open field to the close byre or shed, and a little hay or straw given to them on the ground during that time is the only attendance needed, thus reducing the labour bill to absolutely nothing."

In regard to the question of early maturity, the admirers of the breed boast that when given the same early training the longhorn will show weight for age equal to that of any other breed, and a quality of beef that surpasses most. It has ever been, as it is to-day, one of the greatest favourites with metropolitan butchers.

From all this it will be evident that the longhorn cow is one very worthy of revival. She possesses nearly all the merits that a modern dairymen or grazier requires. It is his first business to secure as much milk as possible, since the fact of the matter



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BLACK EYED SUSAN II.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

is that quality receives no consideration when it comes to be a matter of payment. If by honest means the milk seller is able to produce a quality of milk well above the standard laid down by the Board of Agriculture, he could scarcely be expected to work for a higher proportion of butter fat, and he knows well that, should he use one of those smaller cows which yield a superior quality of milk, it will be to his own pecuniary loss. In the next place he wants a cow that is capable, when her milking days are over, of being fattened up and producing a carcase of satisfactory dimensions for the butcher.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

IN the excellent series of The Antiquary's Books there is none that is at once more authoritative and more interesting than that which has been contributed by Mr. J. Charles Cox, the editor of the series, under the name of *The Royal Forests of England*. The subject is one full of facts, because the sober pages of history, as well as legend, tradition, and romance, are full of references to the "merrie greenwood," and the picturesque incidents that happened there. We can easily see that underlying the work of Mr. Cox there is a fine appreciation of this side of his subject; but in dealing with it he has done well to study and present the hard facts of the case. A great deal of misapprehension existed in regard to this subject, and it has been one very generally neglected. Mr. Cox begins his preface by complaining with very good cause that

"County historians have, as a rule, with but rare exceptions, either entirely ignored the story of the royal forests within their confines, or have treated the subject after the most meagre fashion."

It is but one count in an indictment that could be effectively brought against the County Histories, the authors of which have developed the singular faculty for selecting the most uninteresting subjects to dwell on. Even the definition of "forest" is not well understood. It is given in the latest edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" in these words: "A forest is a tract of country covered with trees, of one or several species, or with trees and underwood." But this is merely a popular explanation of the word. If we go back to Manwood we find in his "Laws of the Forest" that a forest is described as

"a certen territorie of wooddy grounds and fruitfull pastures, privileged for wild beasts and foules of forrest, chase, and warren, to rest and abide in, in the safe protection of the king, for his princely delight and pleasure."

Mr. Cox has no difficulty in showing that even this is not correct. Dr. Wedgwood, as he says, is right in considering "forest" as a modified form of gores, gorest, waste, waste ground. Others consider it is derived from the Latin *foris*, out of doors, the unenclosed open land. The definition given by Mr. Cox himself is this:

"A forest was a portion of territory consisting of extensive waste lands, and including a certain amount of both woodland and pasture, circumscribed by defined metes and bounds, within which the right of hunting was reserved exclusively to the king, and which was subject to a special code of laws administered by local as well as central ministers."

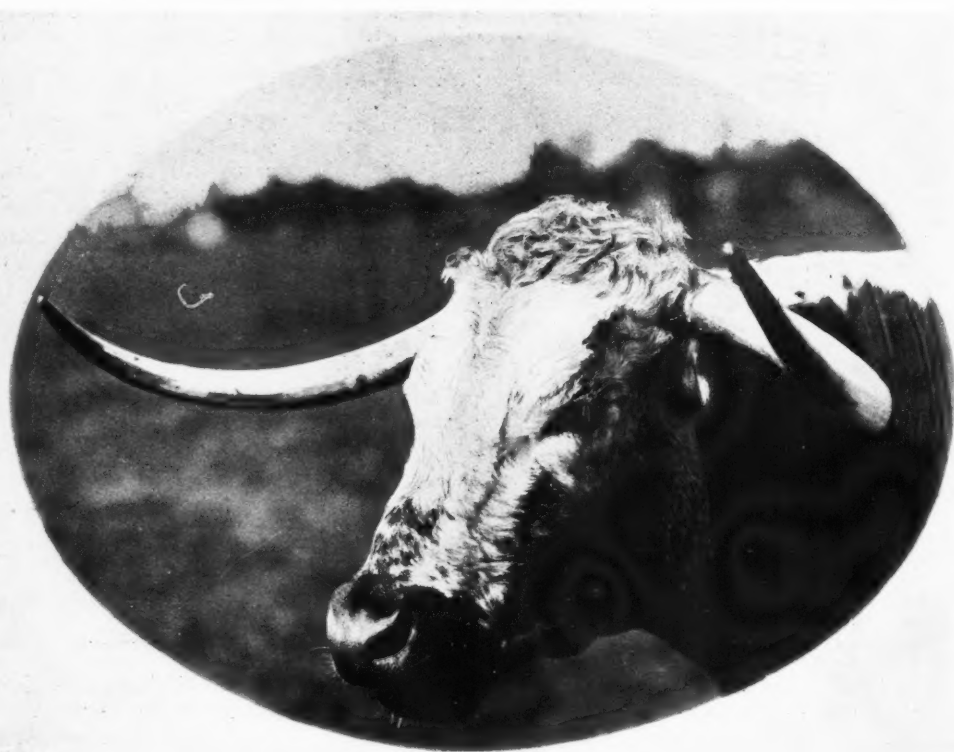
The inaccuracy of the definition has no doubt led to a great deal of wasted energy and learning in the past, since it has led so many scholars to spend their time in trying to prove that the places now called forest must have been well wooded in olden times. The difference between a forest and a chase was chiefly that the latter could be held by a subject, though the words are used occasionally as interchangeable, owing to the fact that a chase was sometimes secured by the Crown, and the royal forest was occasionally granted to a subject. A park was an enclosure fenced off by pales or a wall, and a forest often contained several parks. According to an Elizabethan authority, which Mr. Cox considers to be of doubtful value, the old forests were sixty-nine in number, and there were in addition thirteen chases and more

than 700 parks. To clear the ground for work, Mr. Cox finds it necessary to discuss the word "warren" also. It

"was used to denote either the exclusive right of hunting and taking certain beasts (*fera natura*) in a particular place, or the land over which such right existed."

The grant of free-warren prevented anyone from entering on such lands to hunt or to take anything belonging to the warren without the owner's licence. It would be interesting to follow him into the particulars given of the laws of the forest during the Saxon period and up to the time of the Conqueror and his Norman successor, who ever had a tendency to increase the quantity of forest land.

The forest courts, too, open up a fascinating subject that might well engage our attention, and closely connected with it is that of the forest officers. We omit these sections, however, in order to reach "Beasts of the Forest." From the study of the eyre rolls, and other original forest proceedings, it becomes clear that the forest beasts numbered four, namely, the red deer, the fallow deer, the roe, and the wild boar. Only in the single warren of Somerton, which is in the bounds of Somersetshire, is the hare included in the list of beasts of the forest. The phrase frequently used, "beasts of the chase," has no legal meaning whatever, and applies only to animals that were hunted. That is to say, in addition to the deer we have the boar, the hare, the fox, and other vermin such as the wild cat, badger, otter, and even in some cases the squirrel. "Fowls of the warren" included the pheasant, the partridge, and the woodcock, as well as in certain



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A LONGHORN HEAD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

cases such birds as the plover and even the lark, the capture of which was held to be a warren trespass. At least it is satisfactory from the point of those who are nowadays sometimes reproachfully assailed for hawking larks with merlins, that the most beautiful of our singers has long been held to be a game bird, and the services of a good pointer or setter might be brought in to show the reason. In our day the terms of venery are not used with that nicety on which the hunter of old times prided himself, and Mr. Cox has done well to remind his readers that the young of the red deer in its first year was a calf, while that of the fallow deer was a fawn. The young male red deer of the second year was a brocket, while the female was a hyrzel, the corresponding terms for the fallow deer being pricket and tegg. The third year red deer was a spayard, while a female became a hind. The third year fallow deer was a sorrel and the female a doe. In the fourth year the male red deer was a staggar, in the fifth a stag, in the sixth a hart, and in the seventh a great hart. Another source of much erroneous comment has been the fact that the roe deer is mentioned in various proceedings under the interchangeable terms of *capriolus* or *cheverellus*, the latter being Latinised from the French *Chevreuil*. Now many writers have frequently interpreted the *Chevreuil* as wild goat, and where the destruction of roe deer in a forest was a trespass, that of a wild goat would

have been a merit, since goats were prohibited from being kept in forests, owing to their fouling the ground and driving the deer away. The wild boar was in early times a common object of sport. In 1227 King Henry despatched the huntsman to Pickering to take twelve wild swine for the Royal use. There are several records of wild boar-hunting in Clarendon and other Royal forests in the fourteenth century, and the boar or wild pig roamed through Cranborne Chase as late as the days of Elizabeth. In Lincolnshire, Durham, and Staffordshire the wild boar seemed to be plentiful during the sixteenth century. James I. hunted the boar in Windsor Forest in 1617. The reign of Charles II. Mr. Cox considers to be the latest period at which this animal is known to have survived in England in a really wild state. The wolf, in Saxon times, must have been very prevalent in England, and it had no surer or prolonged retreats than among the wilds of the Peak Forest and its borders. Wolves were abundant in Dene Forest in the time of Edward I., and probably died out of England in the reign of Henry VII., 1485-1509. The last wolf was killed in Scotland in 1745. Packs of Irish wolves were not exterminated until 1710, and the last survival was killed in 1770. In Derbyshire many places and field names attest to the presence of the wolf. Mr. Cox gives as examples "Woolow" (formerly spelt "Wolflow"), "Wollihope," and "Wolfsote"; five cases of wolf in the field names of enclosures within the bounds of the old forest have been found, whilst "Wolfpit" occurs as a boundary of Priestcliffe Common, and "Wolfstone" or Chinley Common in Enclosure Commissions, *temp.* Charles I. What Mr. Cox has to say of the other animals we must pass over, at least for the present, though we should have liked to summarise some of the interesting facts he has got together about the birds of the forest, such as swans, of which a number, valued at £100, were stolen between 1331 and 1345. Hawks and falcons were, as far as their eryies went, perquisites of the chief forester. Herons appear to have been plentiful, as in 1334 Sir Walter de London, the King's almoner, received the title of 157 herons that had been killed in Pickering Forest. Woodcocks were caught by a "cockshut," a large net suspended between two poles, and licences to use these were issued in Derbyshire, Hampshire, and Wiltshire. It is a curious addition to these facts that at the Chester eyre of 1271 the hereditary chief forester of Mara and Moudrem claimed all swarms of bees as part of his extensive perquisites. In 1299

"several men were presented for taking a *byke* or nest of wild bees, and carrying the honey to the house of Ralph de Catoa, where it was found, and also for burning the oak tree containing the comb; the tree was valued at 4d. and the honey at 6d. A long roll of amercements, imposed at an eyre for Sherwood Forest, held at Nottingham in 1334, includes a fine of 12d., in addition to 6d., the value of the honey, on two men, for carrying honey from out of the forest. Particular indictments of the Pickering eyre of 1335 included the taking, by one Gilbert Ayton, of a gallon of honey and two pounds of wax out of old tree trunks. Gilbert appeared by attorney, and said that, by the great Charter of the Forest, it was provided that every freeman might have the honey found in his own woods. The indictment itself stated that he found the honey in his own woods of Hutton Bushell and Troutdale, and therefore he asked for judgment in his favour, and obtained it."

Closely connected with this subject is that of hounds and hunting. The dogs most commonly used were the greyhound, which, according to Dr. Caius, was a generic term applied to several breeds, the brache, a scenting dog, and the mastiff, that was kept generally for the protection of the person, but was also used for the destruction of wolves, and was capable of hunting and pulling down both red and fallow deer. Strakur was the name of a dog favoured by the poacher. Of the velters, the buckhounds, boarhounds, otter-hounds, and harriers, space does not allow us to make mention. Indeed, we have had time to do no more than glance at this most able and fascinating account of the forests of old England and their history.

IN THE GARDEN.

BEAUTIFUL AUTUMN FLOWERS.

ONE of the plants most admired in the garden of the writer this autumn is an *Helenium* known by the name of *H. grandicephalum striatum*. It grows to a height of between 5ft. and 6ft., and has long willowy stems, which are scarcely strong enough to support the bunches of little Sunflower-like blooms of the most beautiful colouring. It is not the growth of the plant that is so attractive, but the colour, which is a warm shade of brown, with a trace of yellow and lurid crimson, a mixture of the three with brown predominating. It is the plant to grow for cut flowers and filling tall vases with them alone, especially where there is a background of old oak panelling. All the *Heleniums* are of strong growth, and very vigorous in ordinary soils. While writing of the *Heleniums*, a word may be said for the Moon Daisy (*Chrysanthemum* or *Pyrethrum uliginosum*), a magnified Ox-eye Daisy, and one of the most beautiful of late September and October flowers. Its tall, slender stems, with their burden of pure white flowers, bend in the autumn wind, and seem to gain added beauty when seen in the silvery light of the moon. Its peculiar beauty, seen under these conditions, suggested the popular English name of Moon Daisy. We once filled a damp ditch with

strong roots, and as pretty an autumn garden picture as one could wish for is the result of this happy thought. We have cut almost sheaves of white bloom for church and house decoration.

CROCUS SPECIOSUS IN GRASS.

This autumn bulbous flower must not be confounded with *Colchicum speciosum*, though both have wonderful colouring. The *Crocus*, however, is the better adapted for growing in grass, and is sufficiently reasonable in price to enable this to be done without great expense. The flower must be seen in the full light of an autumn day for its perfect colouring and effectiveness to be realised. Blue is the predominant colour, but when the warming rays of the sun open out the petals, there is the contrast with a golden orange centre, and the lawn or meadow seems dotted with blue and gold. We often think much of spring and little of autumn; but of recent years many lovely things have been introduced from abroad to colour the garden in September and October. The early *Chrysanthemums* are to our mind as important as the varieties grown under glass. At the present time they are crowned with flowers of vivid colours. A group of the bright yellow *Horace Martin* is as welcome as the pink *Caroline Testout* Rose flowering hard by.

SELECTIONS OF BULBS—THE PLANTING SEASON (Continued).

Fritillarias.—The Snake's-head of the English meadow is the best known of the *Fritillarias*, and may be naturalised wherever an opportunity exists, and also planted in the border, choosing a moist place. Plant the bulbs about 5in. deep. *F. Meleagris* is the name of this beautiful willow, and the colouring appears in checks, imparting a quaint look to the bell-shaped and nodding flower; hence the popular name of Snake's-head. A bed of it on the lawn is welcome, and it may be planted with either the type or the pure white variety *alba*; but there are several forms, the shades including rose, rose purple, and cream. Besides the Snake's-head, there is a wealth of selection. The Crown Imperials are *Fritillarias*, and *imperialis* is the name of this noble bulb. We have tried it with great success in rough grass on a very dry upland meadow. The scent is unpleasant when the stems are gathered, but this does not mar the usefulness of the bulb for planting in this way. The single yellow is a pure and refined colour, and there are orange reds and a pretty form with brightly variegated leaves. These and *Meleagris* are the most popular of the *Fritillarias*, and as certain as any to grow; but the other kinds are interesting and beautiful. We should reserve a special place for the following, a somewhat dry soil and shade agreeing with them: *Aurea*, *armena*, *kamschatkensis*, *latifolia*, *libanotica*, *Moggridgei pallidiflora*, *persica*, *pulica*, and *recurva*.

Hemerocallis (*Day Lily*).—The writer was recently asked to suggest the names of a few bulbs for a place in almost absolute shade, and where the soil is very dry. As no doubt many readers are similarly perplexed, it may be as well to mention that practically the only things that will succeed are the *Day Lilies*, or *Hemerocallis*, and *flava* is the sort we like best. It is very reasonable in price, and the bulbs may be planted thickly without a great tug at the purse-strings. It has yellow flowers in succession, and their fragrance is delicious. This is not the only kind to plant; the choice is a wide one. *H. aurantiaca* and its variety *major* are of larger growth, the last mentioned having apricot yellow flowers. *Fulva* fl.-pl. is the common orange form, and *middendorffiana* is an old garden plant; but within the past two or three years new hybrids have been shown, which will, we hope, become cheaper in price in the near future than they are at present.

Gladioli.—These we plant in March, and before then we hope to give a longer description of them than is possible now.

Iris.—The bulbous *Irises* are flowers of exquisite beauty, and the netted *Iris reticulata* is the colour of the wayside Violet, and a single flower will scent a large room. Where there are no opportunities of growing the bulb in the border, or in the grass, an excellent way is to plant it in a window-box with other bulbous *Irises*, whose beauty must be closely seen to be realised. The following kinds will give abundant joy, for these are the *Orchids* of the hardy garden, and, as they flower very early in the year, they are more under control in a window-box or cold frame. *Bakeriana*, a sturdy in blue and gold, strong Violet fragrance; *Danfordiae*, yellow, a little gem; *Heldreichi*, *Histrio*, soft blue; *Histrioides*, a lovely flower of blue shades; *Persica purpurea*, *reticulata*, and the large major variety which Messrs. Kelway and Sons grow so successfully at Langport, and *rosenbachiana*. With this selection the beginner may well rest content. English and Spanish *Irises* must be, of course, included, and may be planted in bed, border, and meadow. There are many named sorts, but the "mixtures" are very beautiful, the colours ranging from snow white to deep purple. A bed of seedlings is interesting for its variety of colouring. The bronzy form of the Spanish *Iris* (*Iris Thunderbolt*) is worth planting; it is a flower of lurid colouring, brown and yellow, and almost black colours mingling in perfect harmony. *Junceus* should be selected for the purity of its golden colour. The *Cusnie* *Iris*, or *Oncocyclus* as they are called, are difficult to grow, and therefore undesirable flowers for a beginner.

The Lilies.—It is impossible to do more than enumerate a few of the finest kinds for planting now, and we give the advice of the well-known authority, Mr. Wallace of Colchester: "The different soils suitable for successful cultivation I have roughly divided into three classes. Firstly, any good garden soil of a fair depth, well dug before planting, is suitable for such good-growing kinds as *L. Browni*, *candidum*, *chalcidonicum*, *croceum*, *excelsum*, *Hansonii*, *Henryi*, *Martagon* (purple), *pyrenaicum*, *thunbergianum*, *tigrinum*, and *umbellatum*; these will all flourish in any good border soil with fair treatment. Secondly, *Lilies* that prefer a strong soil, such as a good, rich friable loam, not too heavy, viz., *L. auratum*, *platyphyllum*, *Batemaniae*, *columbianum*, *Humboldtii magnificum*, *Martagon album*, *Dalmaticum*, *Pomponium verum*, *rubescens*, *speciosum*, *szovitzianum*, *WASHINGTONIANUM*, and *Wallichianum superbum*. Thirdly, we come to those that require peat and moisture, viz., *Burbanki*, *canadense*, *Grayi*, *Pardalinum*, *Parryi*, and *Philadelphicum*. The above lists represent, in my opinion, those *Lilies* which can be grown with little trouble. Those in the first list will succeed in any border. Those in the second list require a certain amount of partial shade and coolness at the root, and are suitable for planting in *Rhododendron* beds and amongst low-growing shrubs. Finally, the third group comprises those that require a cool shady spot, such as the edge of a pond or stream, or a woodland glade."

THE IRIS.—II.

By EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

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IT pleased me not a little to see that the greatest living biologist, and one of the greatest living men, Professor Ernst Haeckel, quotes the iris amongst his examples of sensible loveliness. Under the head of actinal beauty (radial æsthetics) he shows how pleasure is excited by the orderly arrangement of three or more homogeneous, simple forms that radiate about a common centre; and he cites the four paramera in the body of a medusa, the five radial limbs of the starfish, and the three counter-pieces in an iris bloom. In the matter of colours also the flower generally conforms to a great, if an old-fashioned, criterion of the beautiful. Burke held that the hues of beautiful bodies "must not be dusky or muddy, but clean and fair." He doubted if colours should be of the strongest kind, but held that milder tones of "light greens, soft blues, weak whites, pink reds, and violets" were more appropriate. Since, however, strong and vivid tones could not be excluded from the survey of any flora or tropic scene, he bargained that these high colours should be diversified, and the object never entirely dominated by one. The peacock's neck, the opal, the rainbow, and the rainbow flower all answer to this test.

Let us now approach the great subject of cushion irises. An expert has said that when the oncocyclis group chanced to meet his eye in an English garden, he was reminded of the gladiatorial hail, "Morituri te salutant!" And, indeed, these wonderful things would usually seem to anticipate their own extinction, and lift the fitful flower or aborted bud of mourning over their own graves. We do not understand them, and only a rare spirit here and there has succeeded in bringing them to perfection and providing the conditions they demand. But how great the reward! Their melancholy stateliness, their solitary habit, their size and the magic of their colouring and forms, lift them above not only all other irises, but all other flowers that I have ever seen outside a dream. They are to the garden what Chopin is to music. As he was a genius apart, who, out of suffering and an artist's joy, that rose above suffering, poured

forth magic of harmony and beauty to delight man's ears, and so intoxicated them with glory of sound that they often forgot the quivering nerve-centres of the human miracle who wrought them; so with these most wonderful, beautiful, and sad of flowers, we sometimes miss the spirit in them while overjoyed or overawed by the substance. Without foundering in the pathetic fallacy, I yet have felt before cushion irises that I behold something more than a flower. Many men and women pass me by, or speak with me and eat with me, and both affect and teach me less. It is wrong, but it is true.

Take susiana, the great Turkey fleur-de-luce of old botanists. When first I saw it in the market-place at Toulon I fancied that the women who sat beside the mossy fountain there were selling artificial flowers of the sort that make hideous many French burying-places; but then I came nearer, and found the veritable mourning flower of the Japanese—a huge iris, with petals that seemed woven of transparent crêpe. Sorrow is written in cryptic language on its delicate darkness; a fitting emblem of a

nation's mourning, and worthy to rest on the coffin of saint or hero, is this sombre and solemn thing. As I write a specimen stands before me, that trembled into life yesterday to speak to the living of death. Its texture is a sable silvered. Like arches of little caverns, the style-arms with upturned crests bend over the anthers and open above each signal patch—black as a pall. Closely spattered with ebony are the falls, and between the interstices of this mottling run tiny lines of wine purple. The hairs are black and widely scattered not only over the fall, but over the standards also. These standards spring gloriously up, and are densely embroidered with black on palest grey. The markings are finest and smallest along the median lines, then they increase in size, and finally stretch into a delicate, dark venation at the petal edge. The falls are 5½ in. high, and meet together like wings brooding over the darkness within. Seen against the light a wonderful pattern of network and splash that



K. Durrant.

KOROLKOWI.

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SUSIANA.

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covers the whole flower will be found not black but purple—a red-purple on the falls and style-arms, and a violet-purple on the standards. No man has spoken a better word upon this iris than Parkinson, and none has so perfectly described the colour in a phrase. "The chief of all," he says, "is your Sable flower, so fit for a mourning habit that I thinke in the whole compasse of nature's store, there is not a more patheticall, or of greater correspondency, nor yet among all the flowers I know any one coming neare unto the colour of it." Elsewhere he says that it is of the hue "almost of a snake's skinn, it is so diversely spotted." The cast slough of a serpent is certainly a simile of genius for this extraordinary flower.

If *susiana* be the queen of irises, and fit adornment for the bosom of our loved dead, then *Lorteti* may be called king, and his brilliance, purity, and wonder are worthy to stand for an emblem of life and dawn. It is nearly as large as *susiana*, and I may struggle vainly to describe the amazing thing from the plant I figure. This, in its second year, has just given me five blossoms. Certainly it is the most beautiful flower I have ever seen, even in the tropics. The great standards are silvery white, most delicately veined with purple; and the contrast of the falls is striking, for these have a groundwork of golden white or palest cream colour, and are closely spattered with crimson, which deepens on the signal patch to darkest crimson-brown. The style-branches match the falls, but are coloured a duller crimson, and the tint is spread in a wash rather than spatter. At the edge, however, they, too, are spattered; the median ridge lifts a little, and the style-crest is dotted like the falls, but much more minutely. Short reddish hairs lie in the throat under the pale yellow anther, and the fall, which is translucent, curves round under the flower, so that its wondrous beauty is somewhat lost. The standards bend together like fairy wings, and their claws are also crimson dotted. From Lebanon comes this glorious flower, and there, on the roasting cliff faces, and far beneath the snowy peaks and precipices, it flourishes at a modest elevation of 2,000ft.

Iris Gatesii, another magnificent oncocyclis, is at home in Armenia, and is said to combine the qualities of *susiana* and *Lorteti*. The prevailing tone is a delicate grey; while in *lupina*, the Wolf's Ear, another Armenian, the colour scheme is a combination of pale brown and yellow, producing an effect as of bright wolf fur. A third that so far I have not flowered is *iberica*, a plant of great beauty. It varies much, the colour scheme tending to purples and crimson-purples.

It comes from the Caucasus, and one may picture its loveliness at the feet of Prometheus where he hung crucified against those eternal rocks in the awful noonday sun. *Paradoxa* has so far defied me also, but such an astonishing thing must be flowered at any cost of time and patience. "It is grotesquely beautiful," happily says Mr. Lynch, and it may not be mistaken for any other iris that grows by virtue of its reduced fall and immense veined standard. *Paravar* is a good hybrid, raised by Sir Michael Foster between *paradoxa* and *variegata*. I have a stout and healthy plant of this. *Ewbankiana*, happily named after that great iris-grower, the late Rev. H. Ewbank, and *acutiloba* I do not know; but I would sooner possess the yellow *urmiensis*, which adds scent to its other distinctions. This comes from Northwest Persia and is still very rare. *Atrofusca* bitterly disappointed me last season. This fine oncocyclis from the east side of Jordan threw a splendid bloom spike, and I waited, scarcely sleeping for excitement when night came; but it withered untimely away, and I have yet to see it. A friend consoled me with a sight of *atro-purpurea*.

The comparatively new *nigricans* I have successfully flowered, and found it the darkest of all—as

nearly a black flower as I have seen; but it is the warm blackness of Indian ink, and, like others of this sort, has a touch of gold on the fall above the signal spot. Its spathe-valves were beautifully and regularly reticulated with brown inside. *Haynei* is another new iris declared to be exceedingly beautiful; and *Eggeri* is yet another, though this has been in catalogues for some time. These are of the brown and gold character, but *sofarana* and *Bismarkiana*, both from the Lebanon



K. Durrant & Son.

LORTETI.

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Mountains, are harmonies in purple. For the culture of these treasures you must go to Mr. Lynch, who is a genius as well as a botanist, and can chronicle many brilliant successes; but do not think a light task lies before you—nothing in gardening is much more difficult than the cushion irises, and a large patience under disappointments manifold will be necessary.

The Regelia group is small and select. It has been crossed freely with *Oncocyclus*, and is certainly easier to grow. My plants flowered in their first year, and that abundantly. The superb Korolkowi is a Turkestan iris, and was first sent to his native country by the Russian, General Korolkow. Whether he was a great soldier I know not; but he contributed to the beauty of the garden world when he found this wonderful iris, and it is good that his name should henceforth be immortal.

The shape of Korolkowi is exceedingly distinguished, and its contour has immense character. Some flowers are utterly tame and have an almost inane expression, like the average sheep and many men and women. Not so an iris. Even my photograph indicates the forceful aspect of Korolkowi; but no black and white picture can give the silver-grey texture of petal or the exquisite colour of the venation. Falls and standards are of similar hue in some of my plants: the palest lavender white, or grey; and over both a purple net is thrown that spreads from the median line and breaks into little branches toward the petal edge. The signal is purple-black, and from it, along each fall, there drop a few delicate parallel lines of a slightly darker hue than the surrounding reticulation. The beard is small and black, and the pollen pale gold. The style-arms are short, purple veined and crested. There are several varieties of this species, and my picture answers to *venosa*. *Violacea* is not so beautiful, and the type has paler standards. This I lack, but it is probably the best of all.

Regelia Leichtlini might be called "Bluebeard," for the hairs, which occur on the standards as well as the falls, are richly tipped with azure. The flower has a fine habit and very neat shape, but is smaller and far less splendid every way than Korolkowi. The colour scheme is purple, changing into delicate brown; a russet network covers every petal, but the effect is pallid as a whole. The variety *Vaga* I find a better thing of much richer and finer colours.

Thanks to Sir Michael Foster, many splendid hybrids of *Regelia* and *Oncocyclus* are now in the market. Many of these have the grandeur of the latter, with the twin flowers and comparatively strong constitution of *Regelia*. They are, of course, still costly.

Now for another splendid and select little family: that of *Evansia*. The queen of the *Evansia* section, so called after Mr. Evans of the India House, who introduced *Iris fimbriata* from China somewhat more than 100 years ago, is, of course, *fimbriata*, or *chinensis*, or *japonica*, the Chinese iris. This is a tender plant, but makes strong growth in a suitable situation; though I have not flowered it in the open ground. As a pot plant it is much to be commended, and flowers freely. Each lofty and delicate stem carries from ten to fifteen blossoms with me, but I seldom have more than three or four out simultaneously. It is a fleeting flower, and nothing can be



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FIMBRIATA JAPONICA.

much fairer than its delicate lavender petals all bending at the same angle from the perianth tube in a tender star of six rays. Not only are standard and fall most exquisitely fringed, but the uplifted style-branches break at their edges into a ragged turmoil of tiny filaments and thin away at their margins into threads. The fretted edges and crimped crest make this flower even lovelier than our own wild water buck-bean, or the villarsia. *Fimbriata's* standards are of a colour so faint and pure that it seems rather a delicate shadow than a tint thrown upon the white texture of the petal; while over the falls, on a similar ground, there lie rings of richer purple which spread into veins and die away on the blades. From the midst of these rings there flashes the rich orange "signal." The crest, also, is of brilliant yellow, with a white fringe along it, and the spots of purple as they reach the gold turn to pale brown, then merge in the yellow. Seen through a magnifying glass the work on the fall is infinitely beautiful, and one appreciates the actual texture of the bloom. Each petal then appears like a piece of frosted silver, whereon the pigments have been laid in transparent washes. The flower is fragrant, and, I think, excites more enthusiasm than any iris I show to visitors.

To see *fimbriata* in full loveliness one must go abroad. On the Italian Riviera it is a grand feature of the gardens, and I remember a bank in full flower where a thousand spikes and, perhaps, four thousand blossoms scented the sunshine of a March forenoon at Genoa. It is a precious sight in a formal garden sprawling along some marble-edged bed. I have, indeed, seen nothing more splendid in connection with severe architectural details. One is reminded in the South of what Landor says: "We Englishmen talk of planting a garden, the modern Italians and ancient Romans talk of building one." But surely perfection lies in combining the two theories: in building the garden first and planting it afterwards.

So far I can only admire *Iris Milesii* in my own garden for its immense bright green foliage and vigorous habit, but I recently interviewed the flower at Kew, where it does grandly in the open border, and found it a stately thing with plum purple falls, a slight yellow crest, and handsome standards of a colour somewhat paler than the rest of the flower. The late Frank Miles, artist of fair faces and lover of the garden, introduced it from the Himalayas.

Iris cristata from Maryland and Kentucky is familiar, but not so gracilipes, which I have quite failed to flower. This is a Japanese plant; and yet another *Evansia*, from the same country, is my favourite—*tectorum*, the roof iris, called also *tomiolepha*, "the jagged crest." It came to England in 1872, and began to find its way into gardens a year or two afterwards. The flower of *tectorum* is a beautiful true violet slightly mottled with darker colour. Not a suspicion of yellow marks it, but the falls have a wonderful frill, like our great-grandfathers' shirt-fronts; and this broken, laciniated fringe is spotted with purple, even as our great-grandfathers also were sometimes after the second bottle. The pollen is white, the stigma-branches stand up clear of the flower in the midst, and the standards are spoon-shaped and grow at right angles to the stem. Very unusual grace and beauty mark this iris, and for those who love to link a flower with



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TECTORUM (TOMIOLOPHA).

humanity there is the story about it from Japan and the reason why the plant won its trivial name. Moderns say that tectorum is grown to strengthen the thatch in which it creeps and flourishes, but if we go further back a more picturesque reason may be found. Once there was a famine in the land, and all things that could not be used for food were banished from the soil. On pain of grave penalty might a man plant that which would produce beauty only. But the iris of the jagged crest was stronger than necessity, and answered a higher law than hunger. It belonged to fashion. The Japanese ladies used the powder of its roots to whiten their pretty faces and enhance the brilliance of eyebrows, eyes, and mouths. Hunger, indeed, might have been trusted to rob their little cheeks of colour, but they could not face each other without this precious powder; and the irises, banished from the garden, found their way to the roof. Doubtless, however, this is a legend, for the stories good enough to be true so seldom are.

BIRDS IN THE MOULT.

THE periodical loss and renewal of their feathering, indispensable

as it is for the beauty of birds and the effectiveness of their wings, is, undoubtedly, for most of them an infliction with which they would probably be glad to dispense were that possible. During the time they are shedding their plumage they are evidently weak and depressed; the songsters are generally silent, and some of the brighter-hued and highly-decorated species seem almost to feel their shabby condition. The golden pheasant loses his activity with his ruff and tail, and the mandarin drake, although Nature gives him a new, if sober, coat of feathers at once, loses not only his pride, but also his love for his mate, as if he were afraid to look her in the face when not in full dress. The physical strain caused by the moult also renders birds liable to succumb to the influence of bad weather, such as cold or wet; and, of course, their more or less impaired flight is always a source of danger. It is on the moulting lark that the merlin is let fly by falconers with the greatest hope of success. Under the circumstances, then, it is not surprising that a quick moult is desirable, as bird-fanciers have long ago found out; and hence there is a widespread tendency in birds to moult as fast as possible whenever their safety allows of it. It is obvious, however, that birds which are much on the wing cannot moult in too wholesale a manner; such usually, therefore, shed their quills in pairs only, which

means a rather protracted moulting season. In other cases, as where much ornamental plumage is worn, this may all be thrown off at once, as in the case of the golden pheasant and mandarin duck already mentioned, and equally conspicuously in the peacock. I have even heard of a case in which one of the last-mentioned birds was seen to help on his moult by plucking out his own train feathers.

Even the wing-quills may all be discarded together, and flight dispensed with for a time; but this is obviously only possible in certain exceptional cases, usually among water and

marsh birds, which are under less apprehension of danger from quadruped foes than inhabitants of the dry land. Thus we find a complete moult of all the quills in rails, grebes, and cranes, in some species at all events; while the state of helplessness to which the duck and goose family are reduced by this means has long been common knowledge, owing to the pernicious custom, obtaining at different times and places, of hunting the unfortunate birds at this period of their helplessness. According to my observations, the quills undergo this wholesale shedding in small as well as in large species, in the tiny cotton-teal or pigmy goose of India (*Nettopus coromandelianus*), as well as in the powerful swan; so that defence cannot be relied upon in all cases. One member of this family, however, the curious magpie goose of Australia (*Anseranas melanoleucus*) moults its quills gradually like most birds; and as the half-webbed feet and well-developed hind toe of this bird, together with the very slight development of the characteristic straining apparatus in the beak, point to its being an ancestral form—a living link between the ducks and their unknown ancestor—it is probable that the wholesale moult is a late development. In connection with this it is interesting to note that ducks under unfavourable conditions of life—as when in very close confinement, and with clipped wings—will revert to the gradual method of shedding their quills; a clipped quill is always apt to cause



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LEICHTLINI

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trouble to a bird. The most wholesale moult, and that involving the greatest discomfort, occurs among the penguins. These curious birds, before moulting, become ravenous, and feed up well, but then fast until they are in full plumage again, moping on shore in hungry misery. Their body feathers come off very freely, and the scaly-looking plumage of their flippers—it seems almost using a misnomer to call them wings—sloughs off in patches like the skin of a reptile. The female hornbill, also, immured for the breeding season in a hole in a tree, in some cases, at all events, takes the opportunity of changing her dress, and loses her quills

and tail, thus breaking the general rule that birds do not moult till they have finished breeding; she can afford to do so, as her mate has to do the catering for her as well as for her young during her imprisonment.

One would expect that the great running birds, which cannot fly in any case, would undergo a wholesale moult of the wing feathers, but as far as can be observed this is not the case; so that in some cases, at all events, the opportunity of dispensing with a number of large feathers at once has not been taken advantage of by Nature. The flightless rails of New Zealand, the wekas, do, however, moult in this way, and so does our landrail; and this, again, makes us wonder why such a moult does not occur in the game birds, which usually depend so much more on their legs than on their wings. One would think that the partridge could do without flying for a few weeks as well as its neighbour the corn-crake, living as they do under such similar conditions.

One very remarkable phenomenon which frequently attends the moult is the change of colour which then takes place. I do not allude to the regular alteration in appearance, such as the whitening of the ptarmigans and the numerous striking changes exhibited by such birds as the golden plover, which have distinct summer dresses, but to individual aberrations such as are not unfrequently seen in captive birds. Thus a valued albinistic, or otherwise abnormally coloured, specimen not unfrequently regains its normal colouring on moulting, much to the disgust of its possessor, as I have seen in India with white examples of the house-mynah (*Acridotheres tristis*). Dark varieties are also liable to revert in this way, there being a case on record of a black bullfinch which did so.

Turning to the subject of fowls, it is interesting to note that

the civilised rooster has, in most cases, lost a peculiar moult to which his ancestor, the red jungle-fowl of India, is subject. This bird, which exactly resembles the "black-breasted red" breeds of tame fowls in colour, loses the long orange-red hackles of his neck after breeding, and assumes for some time a covering of short black feathers on that part, which are at length replaced in their turn by hackles again. So rare is this change in the tame fowl that I have only seen it once, and then in a highly-modified breed, the Langshan; one would certainly have expected to find it in the little-changed common fowls of India, inhabiting the same country as their progenitor. It is true I saw this Langshan in India, but he had been imported from China.

Although, however, chanticleer under the protection of man sees no need to go into undress, the case is otherwise with the drake, which still continues to undergo his double moult, losing all his glory of green-plush head and curled tail feathers when he sheds his quills, and then bearing till the autumn the sober dress of his partner, or at least a close approximation to it. This change, as is well known, befalls most males of the anatine family when they wear a much more conspicuous dress than their consorts; it obviously makes for protection, and it is rather significant that the most striking exceptions to it occur in South America and Australia, the rosy-billed duck (*Metopiana rosea*) and upland goose of the former continent being examples among familiar fancy water-fowl. But these zoological regions are believed to be the scene of a less rigorous struggle for existence than others, judging from the more archaic nature of their fauna; and thus it is, perhaps, that a moulting drake can there afford to wear a livery which in more strenuous competition would prove his ruin.

F. FINN.

THE TULLY STUD, KILDARE.

"THAT'S the Hill of Allan, away yonder," says Harrigan, the car-driver, as we leave Newbridge, and commence to drive across the Curragh of Kildare. "And d'ye see that monument? Well, that was built by the tenants for the last of the ould family, and all their names are cut upon the stones on the inside of it, an' the Prince of Wales went to look at it in

1851. Them hills? They'll just be the Red Hills o' Kildare, close by where Chair of Kildare was bred, and that's Doyle's house on your right, and all that land ye see there, that's the Red Valley, and that's Dunne's stables, and the other lot's Featherstonhaugh's. Do ye see that house on your left? Well, it's haunted, and if ever a man sleeps in it sure something bad



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COUNT SCHOMBERG.

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will be coming to him, and that's where Colonel Hall Walker's stud farm begins, and ye'll see some of the yearlings and mares down under that big hedge. Do ye see them now?" Then, as we turn a sharp corner by the side of a stone-encircled well, Harrigan tells us that that is St. Brydge's Well, and "ye'll have heard of that wherever ye come from," he adds. A pleasant drive is ended, when he tells us "this is Tully House, and that's Mr. Gordon; he'll be waiting for you, I expect." Colonel Hall Walker himself happened to be at home as well, and, fortunately for us, was able to join us in our inspection of his stud farm. A book, and one of much interest to boot, could be written about Tully House, and the many objects of interest contained therein, to say nothing of the splendid collection of brood mares which the present owner of the property has gathered together. All that it is possible to do, however, is to make the best use one can of the time and space available. As we stroll along the pathway leading to the stabling, which lies adjacent to the house, a spacious covered riding-school invites attention. These "schools" are invaluable adjuncts to the buildings of a stud, and to this one in particular especial interest attaches, in that on its walls are the "plates" of winners coming from the stud, with their names and the amount of their winnings duly inscribed and totalled up for their respective years. These figures are not without interest. Beginning with the year 1900, shortly after the foundation of the stud, the total stands at £260, to be followed by £770 in 1901; in 1902 the amount reads £1,350, in 1903 it comes to £4,174, in 1904 it stands at £12,650, and in this present year of grace the score at the time of writing is, "not out," £22,640.

Coming out of the riding-school one cannot help noticing the beautiful effect of the light falling on the sheet of ornamental water on the left. About midway down, on the further bank, a big tree casts its shadow, and in the shadow the sunlight striking through the boughs falls full upon a great patch of vivid crimson flowers growing low down on the old wall which lines the farther bank of the miniature lake. Straight in front of us is a flower-covered rustic trellis-work, and on our left hand are old, black palings, upon which the clusters of crimson ramblers in full bloom stand out in bold relief. As we turn the corner into the home stud yard, huge stacks of straw, under the shelter of their iron roofs, proclaim the plenty and abundance which prevail at every turn; and the completeness of the arrangements for the men's messrooms and dormitories, as well as the offices of the stud groom, testify to the care and forethought which the owner has given to the well-being of his employés. In the first range of boxes the system of ventilation, for which, I believe, Colonel Hall Walker is responsible, is well worthy of notice; there is no draught, and yet every box is continually swept by a current of pure air, and the water-trough in each box is kept filled with constantly-running water, which is automatically maintained at its proper level. Three nice fillies are standing in these boxes, the first of which, as they come, is a well-grown bay filly by Persimmon out of Bird of March. She has nicely-placed shoulders and good loins, has plenty of length, with quality, and great power; perhaps she might with advantage be a little longer on the top of her quarters, but one cannot have everything. There is a marked likeness to Sceptre about her head, and the best that one can wish is that there the similarity may be continued on the race-course. Next comes a splendidly-bred filly by Isinglass out of Meddlesome, and, therefore, own sister to Challenger. She is a good hard bay-coloured youngster, with plenty of power, and of fine rein and scope, but just now she shows herself at her very worst, for she is being "bitted," and has not yet become accustomed to the novelty and strangeness of the proceedings. The bay filly by Orme out of Cannie Lass I do not like so well as the others. To my mind she has a softish look about her which does not augur well for the future; but it may be that when next year comes I shall have to admit my error. Close at hand comes the challenging neigh of a stallion in his pride, and here is Count Schomberg, probably the best all-round horse of his day, or of any other epoch in Turf history, the winner of great races on the flat, amongst which were the Liverpool Autumn Cup, the Ascot Gold Vase, and the Goodwood Cup;



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KNIGHT OF TULLY.

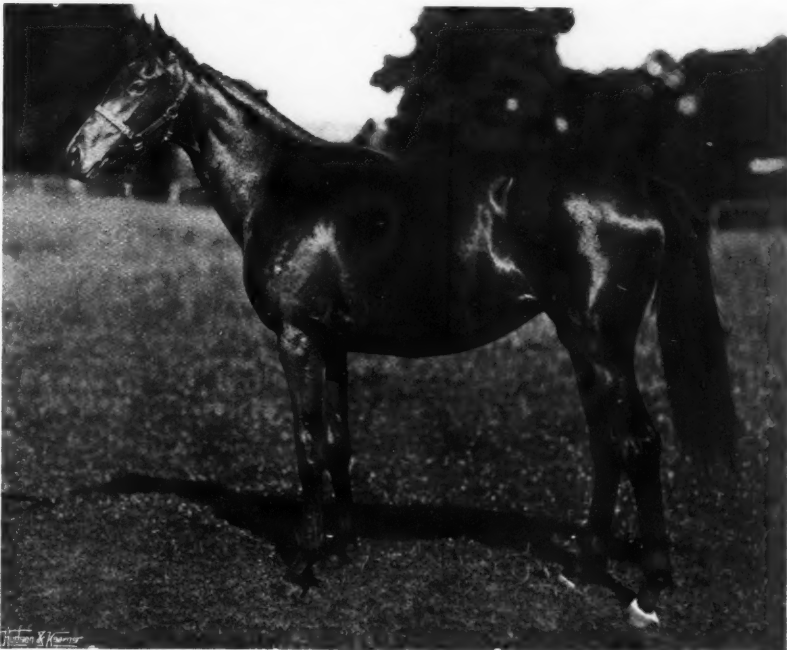
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FRAMPTON, BY GALLINULE—BARBARA.

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FILLY BY PERSIMMON—BIRD OF MARCH.

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FILLY BY ISINGLASS—MEDDLESOME.

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of important steeplechases, including the New Century Steeplechase of 1,000 sovs., and the Great Auteuil Hurdle-race, to which the Grand Steeplechase of Paris ought most certainly to have been added. This Irish-bred son of Aughrim and Clonavarn has, indeed, a record to be proud of. He is, moreover, a very beautiful type of a thorough-bred horse, with his Arab-like reach and rein and his marvellous symmetry, which is so perfect that at first sight one scarcely realises his great bone, powerful quarters, and well-developed second thighs. That a great career lies before Count Schomberg at the stud is evident from what we have already seen of his stock in the shape of Black Arrow, Golden Table, and Merry Moment, and the beautiful picture which Mr. W. A. Rouch was enabled to secure will convey a far better impression of the stamp and style of the horse than any words of mine can do.

While on the subject of Count Schomberg here is an anecdote which, although it has nothing whatever to do with the account of a stud farm, may be of interest to some, and especially to those who believe in strange coincidences. There is a portion of the grounds of Tully House which until quite recently was no better than an ugly and overgrown morass. Colonel Hall Walker hit upon the happy scheme of converting this wilderness into a Japanese garden, with its appropriate cascades, miniature forests, and temples. A certain amount of excavation had to be done, in the course of which an old coin was dug up, which proved on investigation to be a 5s. "gun" piece of the time of James II., in 1690, and here is where the story comes in. In that year General Count Schomberg was killed in the Battle of the Boyne, and his body was recovered from the river by the Rev. George Walker, D.D., who was so well known in connection with the siege of Limerick. Shortly after the discovery of this coin, Count Schomberg, the horse, came into residence at Tully, which is now owned by Colonel Hall Walker. From the home stables to the forty acres of beautiful pasture which are sub-divided into two carefully-boarded round colt paddocks of from three to four acres apiece, is a pleasant stroll, for the doing of which one is well rewarded by the sight of the brown colt by Gallinule out of Merry Gal, of whom an excellent likeness accompanies these lines. He is a yearling of exceptional power and quality, with well-placed shoulders, grand loins and quarters, and bone commensurate with his massive frame. He uses himself with great freedom, and his great, white-blazed face should surely be seen in the front of the fighting when the "blue and white check, cerise cap" of his owner are donned for the fray. Count Schomberg is the sire of a fine yearling colt who has Bush for his dam, and to whom, in anticipation of the deeds which he should do, the name of Knight of Tully has been given. If make and shape are

of any account, he will not prove to be a disappointment, for he is racing-like all over, with beautifully-turned quarters, a good line of leverage from hip to hock, fine rein, clean muscular forearms, and a masculine head, which is not wanting in expression and character. By Gallinule out of Barbara, and so own brother to Barcroft, a great raking chestnut colt attracts attention. He is a light and easy mover, with immense bone and power, a trifle long in the pasterns, perhaps, but with great "possibilities" before him. A useful-looking colt by Isinglass out of St. Matilda has plenty of substance, and is not wanting in many of the characteristics which go to make a racehorse. Last, but perhaps not least in value, of the colts is a well-balanced chestnut son of Pioneer and Go On, and he represents a typical bit of breeding, according to the Bruce Lowe figures, his sire being of the No. 19 family, while his dam's family is the No. 4. To deal with Colonel Hall Walker's splendid collection of brood mares in the space at my disposal is a hopeless task, and, speaking of them generally, it must suffice to say that with the exception of M. Edmond Blanc I know of no private owner who possesses so many thorough-bred mares, nearly all of whom have been purchased with some special object in view. In years gone by the writer would certainly have planned a midnight foray with a view to

plunder had he known of the existence of such an avenue as that through which we walked on our way to the paddocks where some of the mares are to be seen, for on one side of it are 750 Cox's Orange apple trees, while a similar number of Moreilo cherry trees stand sentinel upon the other. *Mais nous avons changé tout ça*; and Sandblast, a beautiful brown mare, by Sheen out of Sahara, is awaiting inspection, with her really fine Persimmon colt foal. The youngster is quite one of the best of his sire's get that I have seen for some time. There is all the Persimmon size and scope, but no lumber or lack of vitality. The mare herself comes of the famous old "Bowes" breed, from which came such horses as West Australian, Donovan, Modwena, and many others, and she is herself the dam of Sandboy. Merry Gal, a shapely bay mare, by Galopin out of Mary Seaton, by Isonomy out of Marie Stuart, is a great favourite with her owner; her own winnings on the Turf amounted to £12,878, and her first foal is the two year old Merry Moment, by Count Schomberg. The wiry, racing-like chestnut foal which is frolicking near her is by Gallinule, and she has been on a visit to Robert Le Diable. It is something to have been the dam of such animals as Jeans Folly and Cherry Lass, the winner of the Oaks, as well as that very brilliant, though somewhat erratic, colt Black



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BR. C. BY GALLINULE—MERRY GAL.

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Arrow, but in all probability Black Cherry, the brown daughter of Bendigo and Black Duchess, will add still further to her own fame as a brood mare, and to the reputation of the Tully Stud. The bay mare accompanied by a typically-coloured chestnut foal by Gallinule is Meddlesome, by St. Gatien out of Busybody, and she is the dam of Challenger, who will yet show what a really good horse he is when well, and she is once more in foal to his sire, Isinglass. Very aptly named is the chestnut mare Shewbread, by Bread Knife out of Canonical. She is half-sister to a number of winners, and is herself the dam of Shah Jehan and Golden Table; her chestnut filly foal by Count Schomberg is a fine, free-moving youngster, with plenty of length and character, and she is now in foal to Persimmon. Barbara, the dam of Barcroft and other winners, is a great upstanding chestnut mare by Kendal out of Sally Brass. Her chestnut foal by Gallinule is an own sister to Barcroft, and she has been covered by Diamond Jubilee. These are but a few of the many mares with whom one would like to linger did time permit; but, however reluctantly, one has to turn one's step homewards, and on our way we pass the place by the willow trees where the gallant old Soater lies buried, and Colonel Hall Walker tells us that he was the most perfect "ride" one could wish for, very light-hearted, and never known to make a mistake at a fence, provided that his rider was capable, which very many are not, of leaving his mouth alone. There are not a few people who imagine that a horse is not an intelligent animal; such as these might, perhaps, give heed to an anecdote, for the truth of which Colonel Hall Walker can vouch, concerning a favourite old polo pony who, seeing some too venturesome foals in danger of drowning, galloped off to a house where she had never been before and continued neighing and whinnying until a man came out to see what was the matter, when she induced him to follow her back to where she had left the foals. The assistance thus brought proved to be in time, and the foals were rescued; but it was afterwards found by her tracks that the pony had made repeated attempts to clear a big fence which would have enabled her to gallop off to her own stables for help. Finding herself unable to do this, she had got over a smaller fence, and hurried off to the first house she could find. The main features of the Tully Stud, from a breeding point of view, are plenty of air, plenty of space, and the best of food. With regard to the yearling colts Colonel Hall Walker has adopted the plan, which is found to work so well, of having a walled-in paddock for each colt, where he can grow and mature his frame in peace without learning the many objectionable habits which colts pick up if allowed to run too long together. Those fortunate enough to walk round the Tully Stud Farm in company with its owner, will, if not completely devoid of intelligence, add not a little to whatever knowledge they may have previously possessed on the subject of breeding race-horses.

T. H. B.

GOAT SUPERSTITIONS.

A GOOD deal has been heard lately as to whether or no profits can be made out of goats, and it may not be uninteresting to refer briefly to a reputation in another direction which has long been enjoyed by these very ancient companions of man. From time immemorial small herds of goats have roamed, almost in a state of nature, over many of the mountainous districts of the country. In Scotland, on the Borders, and in Wales they are still to be met with, and everywhere they have always been, and, indeed, still are, looked upon as amongst the best of weather prophets. A shepherd constantly foretells the approaching storm from the movements of his flock, but if there happen to be goats upon his hill, it is to them he looks, with even greater assurance than to his sheep, for indications as to how the day is to turn out. "If the kids are skipping, it is sure to be rain afore lang," he will tell you, while an old rhyme runs:

"Let him who would be weather-wise,
Mark well where the goat has lain:
Before good weather he's up in the skies,
But he comes down the hill for rain";

another very similar verse informing us that the goats may be expected to be

"Up i' the hill for fine weather,
Doon i' the bield for snaw;
When it's dry they'll lie i' the heather;
On the rocks if it's gan te blaw."

But goats have other qualities besides their reputation for weather-wisdom to commend them to the hill farmer. They are commonly supposed to kill adders, some people even asserting that they eat them; and, though the writer is unable to adduce evidence either one way or another, the belief is deep-seated in districts infested with those reptiles. "Goats kill edders

and fatten the wedders" is a saying still extant in some parts, another version being:

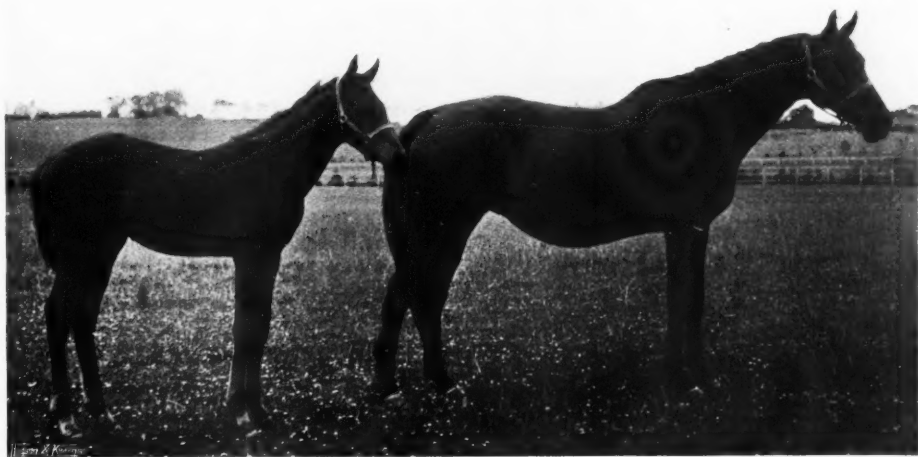
"Goats kill ethers and help the yewes,
There's never na rot where the nannies browse."

The last line refers to a much-dreaded disease amongst sheep, the effect of the liver-fluke, picked up with the herbage upon wet grounds, and to which goats were supposed to be immune, probably from their not frequenting the low lands which are subject to it. However that may be, another proverb has it that "He that harbours the goat will never have the poke," a swelling, or paking, of the skin under the neck of the sheep, being a sign of debility and ill-condition, often engendered by the rot. Yet another rhyme tells us that

"Rot nor poke nor loupin' ill,
I'll no come where there's a goat on the hill."

And the goats were supposed to frighten away the baneful elf, or goblin, who, we are told by the Ettrick Shepherd, frequented many of the Scotch hilltops, and was ridiculously believed by some of the natives to be the cause of the "swelled head," from which their sheep suffered if not driven to the lower ground before evening came on.

Goats, as is well known, will eat with avidity many plants which are distasteful, or even deleterious, to other animals; and owing to this and their great activity amongst rocks, they are able to sustain themselves in places where even sheep cannot live. The tastes of some of them, indeed, are very peculiar, scarcely anything coming amiss to them. Many years ago we were familiar with an old billy who was quite fond of tobacco or cigars, and would consume as much of the fragrant weed as ever he could get hold of; on one occasion we saw him actually munch up and swallow the best part of an ordinary gutta-percha pouch, without any ill-effect following. We also recall an amusing story bearing upon goats and their hardness. Two hill farmers were decrying to one another their respective holdings, with the object, of course, of drawing attention to what skilful management can do to bring out a balance on the right side. "Mon," exclaimed one, "there's a lot o' my



W. A. Kouch.

SANDBLAST AND FOAL BY PERSIMMON.

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farm 'll no keep a goat to the acre." "A goat!" replied his friend, "wi I've aboon fifty acre that'll no keep a deevil to the yacre!"

"No witch comes where there's a goat," is another old belief, though very often a witch, or the devil himself, would appear in the semblance of the animal. "There's no luck where's there's no goat," was another old saying, which still holds good in some parts. The Tynesider of some years ago used to tell you that

"Good luck 'll gan wi' ye, an' yer kye 'll de canny,
As lang 's yer kind te the aad nanny,"

which probably referred to keeping a nanny-goat in the cow-byre. At all events, there is no ambiguity about the following couplet:

"The horse 'll always be healthy and able
Where a goat is kept in the stable."

And the horse, being by nature a sociable animal, and on small or hill farms often subjected to a sort of solitary confinement in his stall, is no doubt benefited by the company of the companionable and cheerful goat.

The sure-footedness of the goat is proverbial, and it is seldom indeed that he falls; but when he does do so, owing to the weight of his horns and neck, he generally alights full upon his head and, receiving the shock upon his horns, often escapes unhurt. We once saw an old male, pushed off a ledge on a seaside cliff, fall a distance of quite 50ft., and land in this manner, head foremost, amongst rocks and shingle on the beach near us. We scarcely expected to see him move again, but to our astonishment he was on his feet in a moment, and bounding off to regain his companions, as if nothing unusual had happened. We felt convinced that it was the only position in which he could have alighted without fracturing some of his bones.

It is related of a herd of goats, at one time belonging jointly to the Bertrams of Crawshaws and the Darlings of Horsecupcleugh, in the Lammarmuir, that, food having failed one very dry year upon their native hills, they were removed to Cockburn Law, another hill some six or seven miles distant; and every year afterwards they made the journey upon their own account. At length they became so troublesome that it was decided to do away with them, and most of them were slaughtered. The leader of the flock, a large male, was captured, and sentenced, for his misdeeds, to be thrown from the highest part of Crawshaws Castle. If he survived the fall he was to be allowed to live and to return with a few of his wives to their native fastnesses, and this he did, and so saved a remnant of his clan from extirpation. LICHEN GREY.



THE Bishop of Worcester's house in Wiltshire, which he inherited through his mother, the heiress of the old West Country family of Biggs, formerly spelt Bygges, is a specimen of the Elizabethan manor house, somewhat enlarged for modern uses, but keeping its old features, and much priceless plaster-work and panelling of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well as a great deal of ancient furniture. In Domesday Book a Saxon lord is given as holding the place, and there are traces of Norman and later pre-Reformation work in the stone walls; but it was enlarged and beautified by one of the woollen princes who made great fortunes out of the sheep farms on Salisbury Plain about the time when Protestant refugees brought their faith and their weaving skill to England. There are still families, such as the Flemings, among the cottagers of Stockton whose names show their Flanders origin. John Toppe in this way acquired great wealth, and enlarged the old Stockton House. He continued the characteristic feature of the houses in this valley of the Wylde by building his new work in layers of stone and black flint, and inside the house he gave full play to his fancy in the plaster ceilings, which still remain in perfect condition, and are frequently sketched. The most remarkable of these is in the great drawing-room upstairs—one of the old Elizabethan galleries—a long, low room, with a minstrels' oriel over the main entrance, and panelled with dark oak, the

panelling giving way in the corner to a porched door within the room, on which figure strange portrayals of Mars and Venus and Juno. Some of the carving on this porch appears to have been done by the artist whom John of Padua brought over from Italy to decorate the great Thynne house at Longleat, not far away.

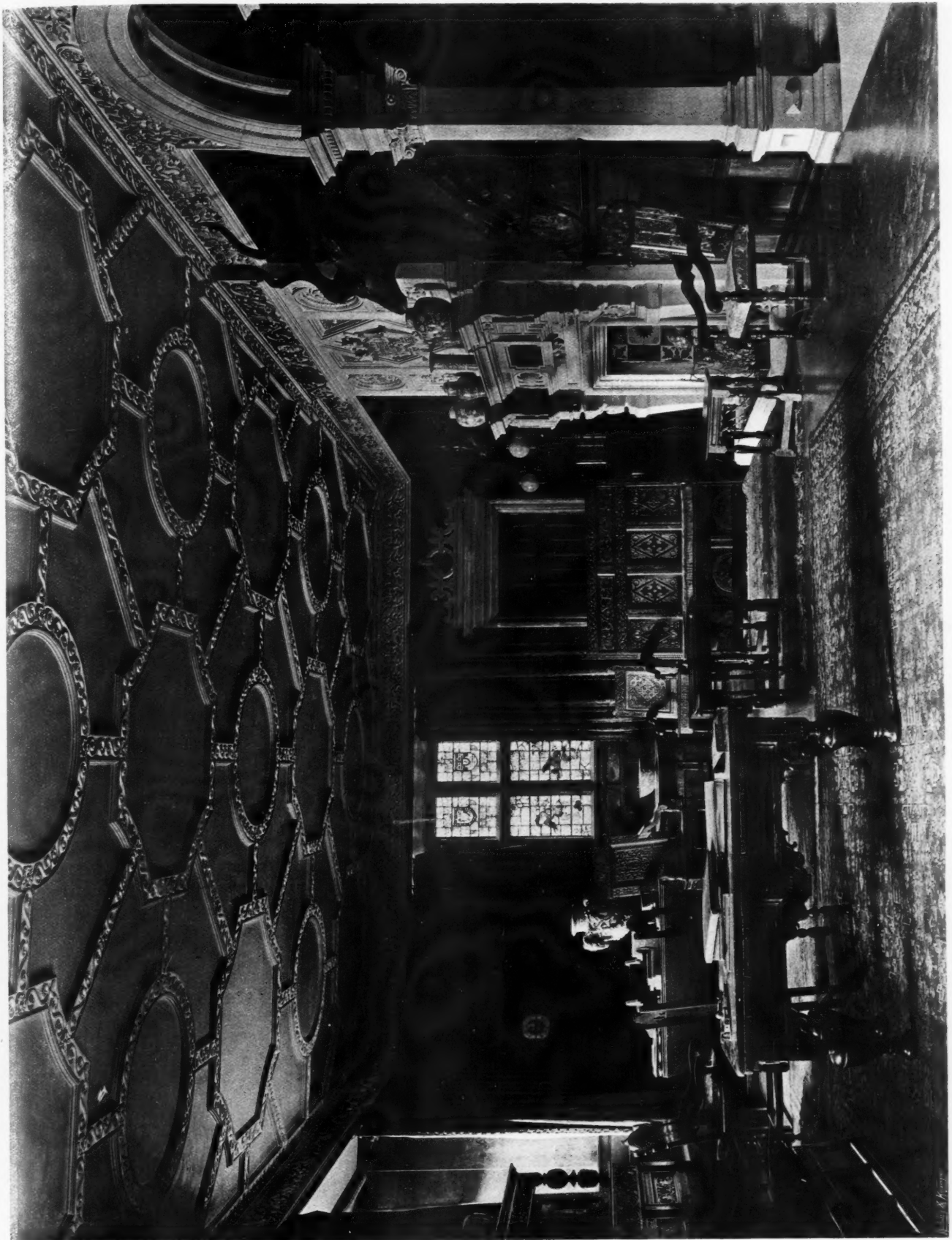
John Toppe and Mary, whose initials appear in some of the other ceilings, passed away in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and lie buried under two fine recumbent effigies in the Biggs aisle of the church. Mary Toppe was buried at midnight with what seems to have been a very remarkable torchlight ceremony, and the service was followed by great gifts of money and food. She and her husband are said to have signified rather boldly, considering that Queen Bess was reigning, their attachment to the older forms of religion, by curious emblems signifying Catherine of Aragon, Mary Queen of Scots, and the King of France, along with an immense plaster piece over the fireplace, depicting Shadrach and his companions in the fiery furnace. With a view of showing that the Toppes also were ready to suffer for conscience, this room is always called "Shadrach." Another remarkable room, hung with old Spanish leather, and containing a magnificent Italian sixteenth-century bed with a canopy, is said to have been occupied by Queen Elizabeth; it has her arms and initials on the ceiling, but those of James I. over the fire.



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STOCKTON HOUSE: THE ENTRY.

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE ENTRANCE-HALL.

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WEST FRONT.

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SOUTH-EAST ANGLE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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SHADRACH ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The staircase of 1802 takes the place of the old oak one. This has the merits of its day, and was put up by Wyatt, the restorer of Windsor, who used to speak of it as his best small staircase. Descending this from Queen Elizabeth's room, the entrance-hall is reached, a long, low, picturesque room with the front door in one corner; this room has about the panelling the assegais and other trophies of General Yeatman-Biggs, the Bishop's elder brother, from whom he inherited, and who did much to preserve and restore the old house. In the same hall is some armour worn by one of the family in the Commonwealth, also some of the muskets served out to the Mr. Biggs of the day, who raised a troop to serve in the defence of the South and West of England

against Bonaparte. The gardens of Stockton House were first laid out in the reign of James II., and one of the old cypresses still remains, but the stone terraces adorned with Cæsar's heads, and an interesting overground outdoor cellar, surmounted by a stone figure of Bacchus, were removed by the Bishop's grandfather, according to the taste of his day, and many of the vases are still found placed about the gardens. Much of the beauty of the gardens is due to Mr. Ashley Dodd of Godinton in Kent, who at one time rented the house.

In the church of a neighbouring village lies buried the wife of one of the Bygges who was a recusant. When she died she was buried in the chancel, only to be dug up ignominiously by orders



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STONWORK IN THE HALL.

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IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

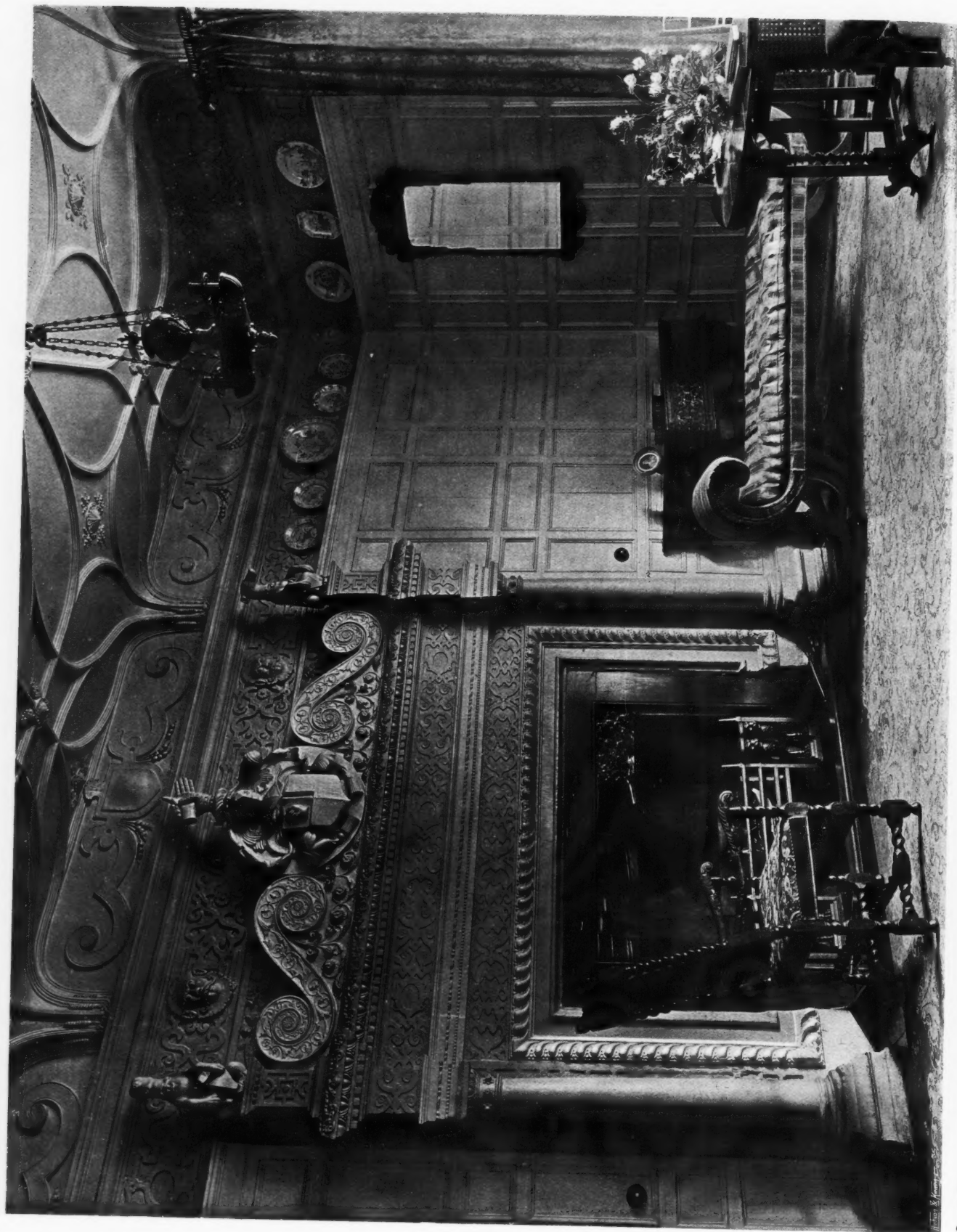
"COUNTRY LIFE."

from London. The next day her husband reinterred her, and by order of the Bishop of Salisbury she was again thrown out, and reinterred by her attached husband, after which what remained of her was left in peace, having been buried three times. In the house is a fine bed brought from Fotheringay, in which it is said that Mary Queen of Scots slept. This bed for some while was placed, oddly, in Queen Elizabeth's chamber, until it was moved at the desire of the late Duke of Albany, who, when on a visit at Stockton, remonstrated on the anomaly.

Stockton has a curious almshouse founded by one of the owners of the place by will. The will, however, was not carried out by the heir, so it is said, until on one stormy night on Salisbury Plain a dread visitant bid him build the house, and

endow eight places, one for each of the years which he had wasted. However this may be, the eight places are there, and they were filled by four women who wore scarlet cloaks, and four men who wore grave, dark blue gowns, until a few years ago, when the picturesque custom was given up.

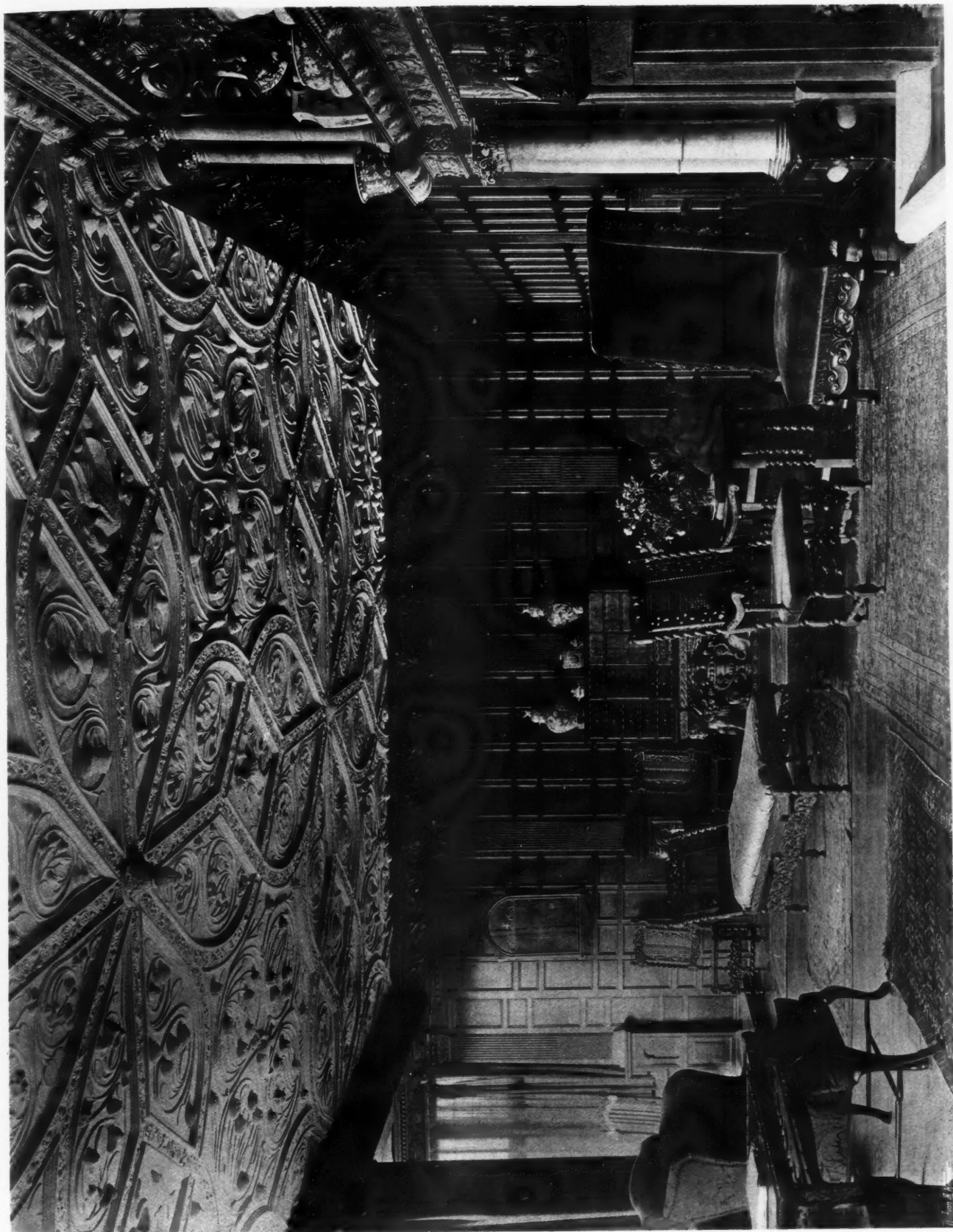
Many stories of Stockton appear in Mrs. Edward Tennant's book, "Village Notes," but enough has been said to give some idea of this old-world Wiltshire manor house with its accompaniments of almshouse and church (illustrations of which will be given in a future article), set in one of the most picturesque of thatched villages, which clusters up in an irregular street, edged with cottage flowers, to the high stone gateposts which guard the entrance to the park.



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THE WHITE PARLOUR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE OLD DRAWING-ROOM.

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CEILING OF THE DRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

General Yeatman-Biggs, the last squire, was a very distinguished soldier and Grand Master of the Freemasons of Bengal. He commanded the second division in the Tirah Campaign, and sank from exhaustion at Peshawar when he had brought his men successfully through the Bara Valley.

CORN CARTING.

THE works of farming go on almost as quietly as those of Nature herself. As I look from my window it occurs to me that in the last twenty hours some of the colours of the country have changed as by stealth. One field especially, which was grey tawny yesterday, and last week bright with corn, to-day shows dark violet and brown. The plough was at work there yesterday. Now and again a flash of harness glanced across the valley; now and again a far-off exhortation from the ploughman to his horses reached me. But this was only another natural sound, like that of the

rooks following the new furrows. The thing was going on so quietly that I hardly noticed it as going on at all, and the change is almost surprising now.

In late August days, particularly, the transformations seem almost as if the weather had effected them. They take place mysteriously. The populations of corn-shocks silently make their appearance in the fields, and then by and by are gone, you hardly know how. Only, as they disappear, you are aware of some mushroom growth or other of a rick, which was not there within the hedgerow when you passed in the morning. If you chance upon the rick when it is growing, with its builders atop of it, you may hear a rustling of dry sheaves, or a quiet

murmur of country voices, but that is all; and the rather tired sound of the breeze in the elms and oaks of the near hedgerow is not more peaceful.

How much of this may be due to the close fitting of the work, in all its details, to the conditions of Nature herself, I do not know. Most work has to fit close, but very often it is with violence in the fitting; but the work of farms, including these harvest tasks, is a kind of soft treading in the footsteps of Nature, so that



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WINDOW OF THE WHITE PARLOUR.

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STOCKTON HOUSE: WINDOW OVER THE PORCH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

her charms are not ruffled. Deftness of handling, with good management, is what the whispering sheaves seem to ask for, and get. Some knack goes with the carrying of the corn and the building of the rick; but there is even more of accumulated common-sense in it, by which the harvesters do not so much force Nature's acquiescence as humour her to their will. By aid of stored-up experience, without clash or friction, steadily, swiftly, the rustling corn is spirited from the far corners of the field to the rick; and it does not sound or look like a very busy process, but like a leisurely one, until you examine closely. And that is just the way with Nature's own processes, too.

By long practice the farmer whom I saw taking up his oats had become himself the most quiet but effective medium of the forces by which corn is harvested. He was seventy years old, and said he could not work so well as he used to; but the precious knack, and the more precious common-sense, that he had at command, made the work go smoothly and look easy, like playing the fiddle. Perhaps a fifth of the field—not more—had been cleared when I found him there, keeping an eye on everything and leading the horse, as the waggon trundled along beside the rows of sheaves. The sheaves had been pulled over on to their sides beforehand, that their butts might be dry when they were lited, and they lay in little heaps of six,

sound accompanied the waggon along the rows, and was as apt to the country as any repeated call of wood-pigeon or peewit. So it went all the afternoon, monotonous and pleasing. Necessity kept it alive and exact. The "Wo-o," being addressed to the horse, never varied; nor did the "Stand hard" vary in pitch or tone-quality, for it had to reach the man in the waggon, as a warning to him of the movement which at once followed. Sometimes the words were altered to "Stand tight," or "Stand fast," but not the sound, which had a slight chanting ring in it, capable of suggesting caution, but had no loudness to disturb the quiet of the afternoon.

There came a short interruption of it, and it was like breaking a silence. In this interval I said something about the ever-renewed call of warning; and the farmer remarked, "The old carter we used to have would never say it. Very dangerous for the man in the waggon, because it might go on unexpected, and overbalance him. I used to say to the others, 'You've got more patience than I should have had at your age. After he'd served me that trick three or four times, I should have been down out of the waggon and punched his head.'" Meanwhile, the other two had changed places, and Charlie, now standing up in the waggon, was fidgeting about with his belt. "He've brought it all up in lumps, all round under my belt," I heard him say; and



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GARDEN ARCHITECTURE AT STOCKTON HOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

ready for pitching into the waggon. Of course, everyone can picture the scene: the field ringed by its hedgerow, dark green against the pale stubble; the width of space and air, the long vistas of shocks, the farmer with his horse, and the waggon and the two other men, one standing in it to receive the corn tossed up to him by the other. But the nicety of their interacting efforts will bear speaking of. It was "like clock-work." Trudging easily beside the waggon, Charlie, the carter (good, capable, brown-armed man, with wide mouth and steady eyes), wasted no movements. As he thrust the pitchfork—which is a tool shapely as any natural growth—into the sheaves near their straw-band, and so raised them aloft two at a time, and turned them over into the waggon, his action went into circles rhythmical and flowing. In comparison his mate's movements in the waggon seemed a scramble, yet he was ready each time to receive the additions to his load, and there was more in his work than could be seen from the ground. But of that by and by. At the horse's head the farmer was watching, peering round from the near side where he stood to the man pitching on the off side, and at every third pitch, as the prong was withdrawn from the last two sheaves, "Stand hard!" said the farmer, and the horse strained and the waggon moved forward to the next heap, where a "Wo-o" stopped the horse again. "Stand hard—Wo-o," in two notes, of which the second was a little the higher, this

the other laughed, "Hit 'im with your fist!" "What is it?" I asked. The farmer answered, "Emmet, or something, inside his shirt."

Emmet, or whatever it was, Charlie had to endure it, for the afternoon's work might not be dislocated. Right away across the field the rick was a-building, and by now was some 8 ft. high. I admired how level they were keeping it on the top. Two men stood there taking the sheaves from a third who pitched them up with methodical prong action out of another waggon in which he was standing. But if Charlie, where we were, stopped to catch his emmet, those three out there would presently be hindered. It was necessary for the two sets of three to keep their respective halves of the work balanced; so on the waggon went, while Charlie's mate now wielded the pitchfork, saving time not by hurry but by exercise of care. How? Simply by depositing each sheaf the right way about, so that Charlie had no need to turn them over. The ears must lie inside, and it is the butt of the sheaf that projects over the waggon. And this is no caprice, but necessity will have it so. Though it looks a scrambling affair, and is, of course, a very simple one, still this loading up of corn-sheaves is a kind of primitive art, and it reaches down for its justification among some of the pleasantest of natural facts. Because the stalks of corn have chosen, such ages ago, to grow as they do, and now make bunches of a certain shape

when tied together, there is one good way, and perhaps only one, of piling sheaves on a waggon; and it is by practising this one way that the harvesters can save their load from falling asunder and bring it home. Therefore they work quietly, keeping hands and eyes busy, so that by the time the other waggon by the rick-side is empty theirs may be coming up to it full.

Once there, a variation of the same primitive art comes into play. And since this quiet efficiency of the harvesting is my subject, I may hardly digress to tell how, when the waggons were changing, the distracted Charlie, retiring towards the hedge, so as to be screened from the high road, took off his shirt to hunt for his tormentor, and found not an emmet, but a spider. Seen against the dark autumn foliage, his naked skin was white and very picturesque; it had a classical look, in what was otherwise a Constable landscape. That, however, is not to my point. On the other hand, I may not quite omit the contribution the waggons made to the gentle sounds of the work. They passed almost noiselessly over the stubble, and pressed but shallow ruts into the dry soil; but the light clatter of hubs on axles filled in, like a row of asterisks just audible, the space between the farmer's "Stand hard" and "Wo-o." I do not know a more peaceful sound. The second waggon contributed a groan too, where a loose spoke creaked in the near fore wheel. This sound, I admit, ought not to have pleased, but I learnt that the old waggon had gone through sixty previous harvests, and must through many of them have rattled most melodiously to be able still to creak.

After about two hours of this all but soundless labour, the rick (to come at last to that) had grown surprisingly, and now

they were tapering it off towards the top ridge. It was a job that the farmer chose to superintend, and I stood at his side. No longer could the man in the waggon pitch the sheaves high enough; but, of course, experience has long known the way of getting over this difficulty. In a niche left halfway up the rick, a young man stood with pitchfork, receiving the sheaves sent up from the waggon and hoisting them again to the men at the top. He did his best, but, as was remarked to me, he had no knack, and was wasting some time. He failed to catch the sheaves direct from the other man's prong to his own; in fact, he made no attempt to do so, but waited until they were laid in the niche; and then, when he raised them, as often as not they were the wrong end foremost for the men on top. A Board-school product, I was told, this youth was, who had come to farm-work from a brewery store, where he had chiefly learnt to smoke cigarettes. In a few minutes, and without a word from anybody, Charlie slipped into his place, and things went more easily. The farmer gave a few directions as to raking out the sides of the rick, and so on; Charlie had something to settle about corn for his horses; and so we turned, the farmer and myself, leaving the men to finish.

At the gate of the field I looked back. It was a striking transformation I saw, for I had watched it in detail without realising how much was being done. But there was a rick sprung up, sudden as a mushroom in the night; and, save for two or three rows still standing, the population of sheaves was gone. It seemed as if it must have happened while I was not looking; there had been no more noise than I have described, and yet the field was all but empty. GEORGE BOURNE.

A TYPICAL WILTSHIRE VILLAGE.

CODFORD ST. MARY lies just outside the precincts of Stockton House, which we have illustrated on our previous pages, and probably in early days supplied the many labourers that would be required by that great establishment. It is a village very typical of Wiltshire, as will be readily perceived by anyone who knows the country. Looking from the road on either side we see the rolling and not very high downs which gradually slope into Salisbury Plain. They are broken here and there by well-plafted woods that speak of the sporting character of the district. All over the neighbourhood the characteristic Wiltshire cottage may be found. Usually it is built of white mud from the chalk that underlies the top soil and the green and fertile fields lying

all around. In one respect the particular place we are referring to is more fortunate than others, since it is not so much lacking in water supplies. On the downs themselves it is not uncommon to find that the pit formed by digging up the chalk has afterwards been utilised as a tank or well in which to collect the rain-water which is to serve all the purposes of the household.

In Codford St. Mary the houses are not built exclusively of chalk or clay, but here and there is a wall which has been constructed of that material and roofed with an appropriate cover of thatch, as all these walls should be. In a village not very far distant may be found a chalk wall roofed over with galvanised iron, and the result is disappointing in a very high degree, as the hideous iron roof does not go at all well with the picturesque



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CODFORD ST. MARY: IN THE VILLAGE STREET.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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TO CODFORD CHURCH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

wall. One point about the Codford St. Mary cottages ought not to escape attention. It is that the majority of them are detached, with a plot of garden in front and a piece of ground at the back. Here again we notice a great improvement as compared with the state of things which prevails in a neighbouring village where the cottages have been built in terraces, exactly as though they were part of a London suburb. It is much to be desired that those who lay out cottages in the future will avoid this mistake, as it has nearly every drawback that can be conceived. Land is moderately cheap; no excuse exists for building cottages in terraces; and each little occupier is much more comfortable when he is surrounded by his own land. But still more important is it to bear in mind that it is very difficult to escape the tyrannical Building Bye-laws when the cottages are joined, as that makes the danger of fire almost as great in the country as it is in the town; whereas if each tiny dwelling is separated by an appreciable distance from its fellows, the danger of fire is thereby greatly lessened. Of the regulations in existence for forcing those who are building cottages to conform to the requirements

of the Building Bye-laws, here one does not think. The pleasing old road winds generally through lines of houses looking smilingly out from the pent-houses of thatch under which they are placed, and, in the words of Oliver Goldsmith, might be described as one on which the sun delighted to linger. It makes one wish to be able to disinter the short and simple annals of the poor people who lived there in bygone centuries, before steam had brought the town so far into the country, or the motor-car had become a familiar feature on the

highway. Here, too, might have been a suitable dwelling for the gaffer and gammer Andrews, so pleasantly pictured by Henry Fielding.

Appropriately enough, this old-world village has a still more old-world almshouse, the site of which seems to carry us far back indeed. It was founded in 1641, in circumstances that have been explained in the previous article, by John Topp for eight poor persons, and the following are the main provisions of the deed, which has not been referred to, and which was not carried out until some years after the death of the testator:

"To all Xtian people to whom these presents shall come, Greeting.—Whereas John Topp, late of Stocton, in the county of Wilts, Esq. deceased, son and heir of John Topp, of Stocton aforesaid, Esq. also deceased, did by his last will and testament give and bequeath the sum of one thousand pounds, lawful English money, to be consolidated, and not broken into fractions or fragments in the work, to erect some foundation for establishing some charitable use tending most to the honour of God, to continue for ever free from bribery and corruption, in the said

county of Wilts, or University of Oxford, for the benefit of such as shall be in truth poor and needy. First, of his nearest of blood and kindred, and if there shall be none such, then for the benefit of such poor and needy as shall be of the county of Wilts, and more especially of Stocton aforesaid, and Codford St. Mary, in the said county, first and before others. . . ."

And with regard to the inhabitants, the deed goes on to state that "There shall be from time to time chosen to inhabit in the said Maison de Dieu,



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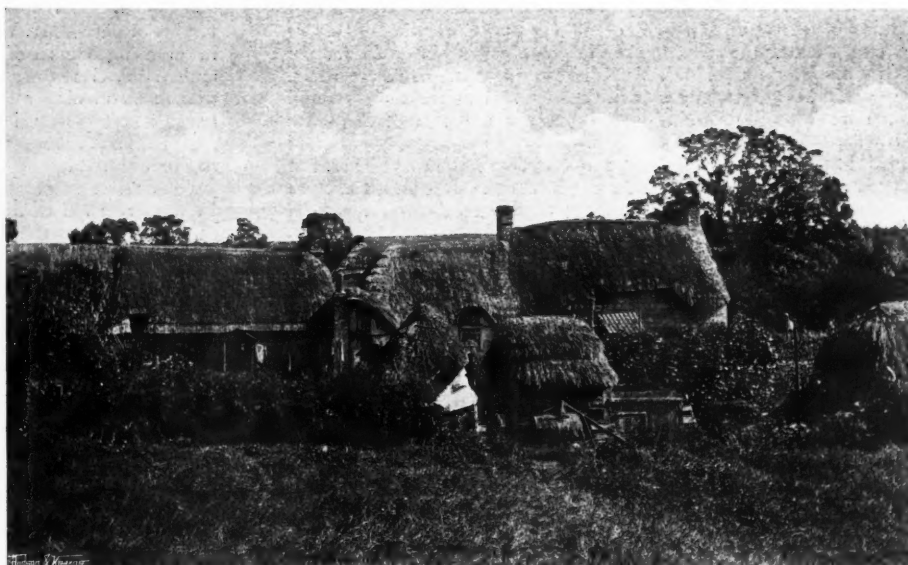
ALMSHOUSES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Hospital, or Alms House, *eight poor old people.*" There were to be eight rooms "severed and divided one from the other, and . . . every one of the said poor people shall have a several room to dwell and inhabit in, and shall have a several piece of ground allotted to each of them for an orchard or garden." Money was not to be denied them, for the deed provides that "every one of these poor people shall yearly and every year, out of the profits of the said land, have provided and bestowed on them a gown of the price of thirteen shillings and fourpence, and . . . every of the said poor people shall from time to time for ever receive and be paid the sum of two shillings a week for their better support and maintenance."

A BOOK ON LAWN TENNIS.

MUCH heated discussion was aroused by the publication of a recent work on this game—"Great Lawn Tennis Players," by G. W. Beldam and P. A. Vaile; but as to three points there can be no question



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SEEN FROM ALMSHOUSE WALK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE HIGH ROAD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

whatsoever. First of all, the photographs by Mr. Beldam are excellent. Considering the difficulties of getting the right stroke for a snap-shot, and snap-shotting it at the right moment by a supremely nice art of timing, we cannot but think that Mr. Beldam has at least equalled his famous golf series in his book on "Great Golfers." He stands all by himself as a photographer, partly because he has played these games himself, and, unlike the average photographer, sympathises with the movements. Secondly, all will admit that the book arouses interest and opposition, and this is just what is wanted. Thirdly, every point has been thought out conscientiously, and most points have been expressed clearly. In these days of rapid and slipshod writing, we are glad to find a careful work, thoroughly genuine.

The first objection to it is likely to be made by experts and by those who have watched experts. Does Mr. Vaile really know quite as much as he thinks he does? Does he know enough to put it into practice and beat the experts? Or is it possible that in his devotion to theory he has forgotten something which comes into account during fact and practice?

Now, as to such a point as that a

player often loses power by not letting his left arm swing freely when he makes the stroke—for ordinary players there can be little

doubt that the criticism is sound, and that occasionally even so great an exponent as H. L. Doherty may make a mistake. As a general rule, it is a pity to lose the swing and power which the free left arm can add. In general, the use of the body is extremely valuable for power, pace, and safety in the stroke. But when Mr. Vaile implies that H. L. Doherty has little pace in his stroke compared with the pace of Mr. P. A. Vaile, and that he loses a great deal by not putting his body into it, we are bound to set a query in the margin. It is one thing to stand and make a stroke with a ball set ready in position; it is another thing first to run, then to have at command—as Mr. Doherty has—a most excellent wrist stroke and power of timing; it is another thing after the run to add to that wrist stroke a full body swing, which may upset the nice timing of the wrist stroke altogether. To take an instance in cricket—Ranjitsinhji has the wrist stroke and the timing to perfection; Jessop has the body stroke. If Ranjitsinhji added all Jessop's body movement, would he be equally successful? or if Jessop added all Ranjitsinhji's supple wrist work, would he? Is it not possible that there are cases when either one or the other power should decidedly predominate? A combination might be risky.



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NEAR THE LODGE OF STOCKTON HOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Where Mr. Vaile gives praise there can be no question that praise is merited. No one could deny that Caridia's half-volley is exquisite, or that Mahony's back-hand smash is enviable. It is in his praise that Mr. Vaile is at his best. And where he gives blame, he generally gives it fairly. But what one would have liked to see would have been, not a series of dogmatic criticisms, as if there were only one way of making a stroke, and as if Mr. Vaile himself were past master of that one way, but rather a series of questions and problems. If only Mr. Vaile had said, "Does it not seem possible that such-and-such a method would be better?" we should have been, perhaps, less stirred by his book, but less disturbed also. The style leaves, somehow, the wrong impression behind it. The illustrations should have been left to tell more of the tale, or, rather, to ask innocent questions; there should have been less uncompromising condemnation. But the book is for beginners. It insists on the right position for the feet, the right shifting of weight from foot to foot, the keeping of the eye on the ball, the use of large and safe muscles, and so forth.

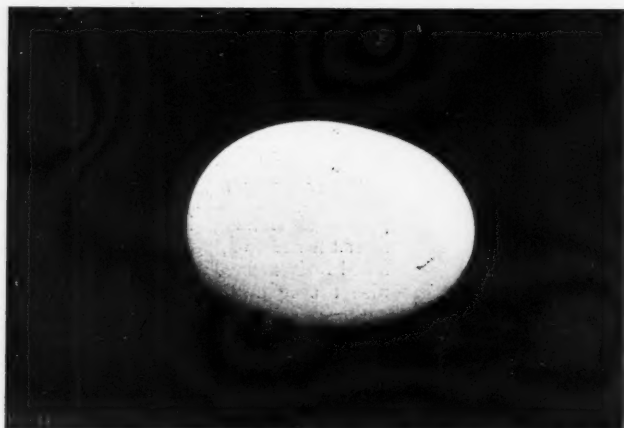
As to the rest—the details of individual strokes and the tactics of play—Mr. Vaile may be wrong. He is certainly wrong in imposing one set of tactics on all alike. To ask S. H. Smith and A. W. Gore to come up to the net against H. L. Doherty, and to ask some player great at the net not to come up to the net nearly so often—this is going beyond that with which we can agree.

The book makes one think. That is its chief merit. No one could read it with apathy. It arouses opposition, if not furious resentment; but, anyhow, opposition—and this is good. In modern days of smooth criticism a blatant thing comes as a change, and, on the whole, a salutary change. After it, we go back to the old courtesies and almost worshipful praise of anyone because he happens to be successful with a certain relief, because there is not any rude harshness here; but we also go back to them with a certain wholesome scepticism. We cannot help asking ourselves whether these experts, great as they were or are, are altogether great; whether now and then, even in their good strokes, they are necessarily doing themselves full justice?

EUSTACE MILES.

THE DAY-OLD CHICKEN INDUSTRY.

FOR a good many years the system of selling sittings of eggs from pure-bred fowls has been in vogue. Eggs travel very well when carefully packed, and many a poultry-keeper has found the investment of a few shillings for a dozen eggs returned over and over again by the chickens produced from them. But buying eggs for hatching has always remained something of a lottery, and so of late years an improvement on this system has been successfully tried—the selling of newly-hatched chickens instead of eggs. That day-old chickens should be able to stand a railway journey of several hundred miles may surprise some people, but a little reflection will show why this is so. A chicken grows out of the white or albumen of the egg, and the yolk is apparently unaffected by the process of incubation till just before the chicken hatches,



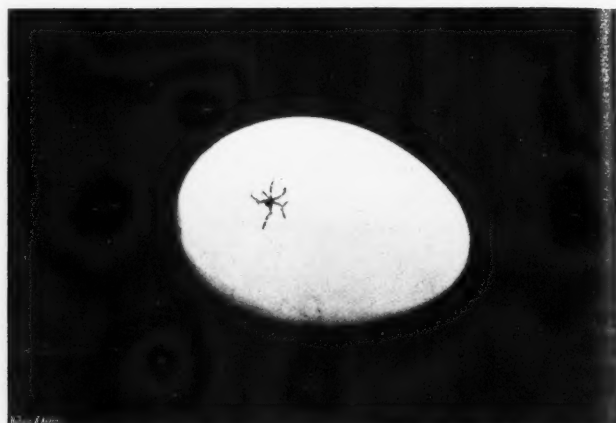
O. G. Pike.

A SILENT PRISON.

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when it absorbs the whole of it into its stomach. The newly-hatched chicken requires no food, nothing but sleep, for at least twenty-four hours, and will even go another twenty-four without food; this is because it is living on the yolk it absorbed just before it became an entity. Once a chicken begins to eat, it requires feeding every few hours, therefore the journey should be taken before it begins to need sustenance; it would be impossible to send chickens a few days old long distances with success.

Within the last few seasons a large and increasing demand for newly-hatched chickens has sprung up; instead of eggs which may prove unfertile or added, or



O. G. Pike.

THE STIRRING OF LIFE.

Copyright.

produce but a chicken or two, the purchaser gets twelve chickens (a convenient number to travel together), and he or she frequently finds this a better investment. There are a great many poultry-keepers who, for various reasons, prefer to start with their chickens ready made, as it were, instead of setting eggs; at all events, the demand for baby chicks is surprising, and people who a year ago talked of the industry being overdone were quite at fault. But though there is money in the business, I would strongly caution amateurs who know little or nothing of incubator management against taking it up.

Some of the most successful producers and sellers of day-old chickens are ladies. One I heard of last year sold 15,000, and the death-rate, I was told, did not total 1 per cent. These figures have been largely exceeded by some of the big poultry farmers who are taking up this special line. Like all undertakings, embarking in this industry needs knowledge and capital. The

first essential is an incubator-room, and several incubators. The type does not matter in the least: some prefer the hot-water or tank incubator, others the atmospheric; but they must be reliable machines, and in order that the best results may be got from them the room in which they stand should have an equable temperature and be one not easily affected by variations of the air outside. The reason why many poultry-keepers find artificial incubation a failure is because the incubator is placed



O. G. Pike.

A MOST UNCOMFORTABLE WORLD.

Copyright.

in a room exposed to draughts, or in other ways unsuitable for it; a good-sized chamber devoted entirely to the machines is essential for the seller of day-old chickens. But before we get the chickens we must have the eggs, and this important matter must be arranged beforehand. It is here the poultry farm with several hundred laying hens on the premises has the advantage. Supposing a dweller in a little country town wishes to take up the industry, a contract must either be made with one or more big poultry establishments in the neighbourhood, or the hatcher must distribute fowls to various country dwellers and stipulate for the purchase of the eggs at ordinary selling prices.

For selling the chickens the producer must rely wholly at first on advertising—this, of course, cuts into the profits, but is unavoidable; at least one local paper should be patronised, and some of



O. G. Pike.

CLEAR AT LAST.

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be a standing advertisement in two papers, at any rate at first. An important matter is the breed; pure breeds only should be hatched, and these of the popular varieties: Wyandottes,



O. G. Pike.

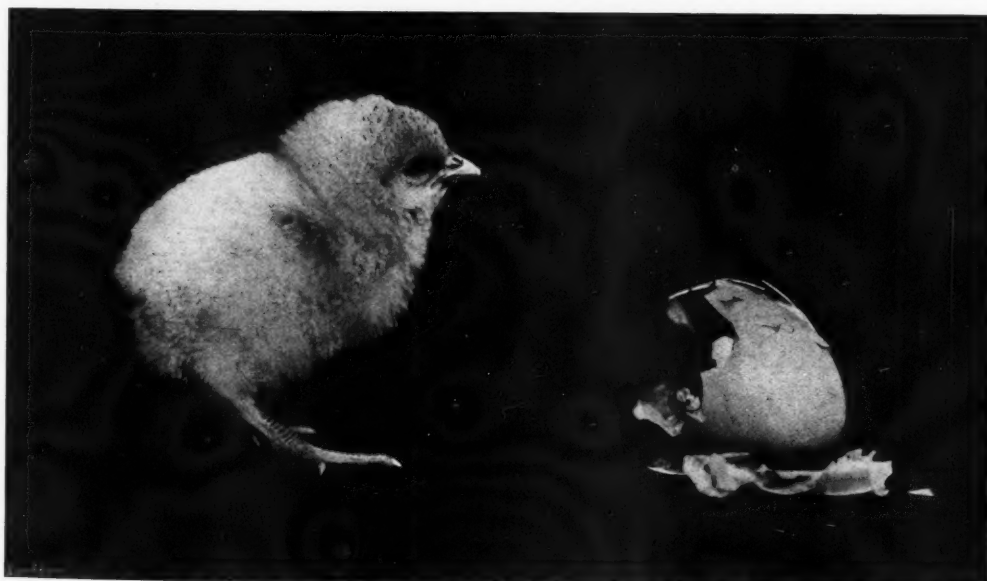
JUST OUT—DISCUSSING THE SITUATION.

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the weekly poultry journals. There are three of these and one well-known tri-weekly, and some discrimination is needed, as it would not pay to advertise in all; but there should

whites and partridge; Orpingtons, black and buff; white Leghorns, black Minorcas, Faverolles, and Barred Rocks. These are the breeds and varieties most largely kept to-day, and for these there is the biggest demand, and therefore a readier sale. The season begins early in the year, and lasts till May. Not only hens', but ducks' eggs can be hatched if necessary, and a third opportunity of profit consists in hatching neighbours' eggs or those of anyone who brings them. The incubator station is well known in France, and some hatch enormous quantities of eggs; but to do this large egg capacity is needed. It is really hardly worth while starting with less than four 100-egg machines, the cost of advertising being proportionately lower the bigger the scale of the business.

For sending the chickens away special boxes are made. A convenient size for a dozen is 9½ in. long, 6 in. wide, and 5 in. deep; ventilation holes should be made in the lid. The corners should be blocked with hay to prevent the chickens crowding



O. G. Pike.

"I COULDN'T GET INTO THAT NOW."

Copyright.

into them. In cold weather the bottom should be lined with cotton-wool; if the weather is mild, hay. There should also be a strip of flannel or canvas, according to the season, loosely tacked on to the lid of the box, so that it rests on the backs of the inmates. The box should be sent by an express train—and here I should add that it is important for the producer to be near a station on a main line—and, if properly packed, the chickens take no harm. As soon as they arrive they should be fed; if they seem rather lifeless they should be put in a warm place, when they will soon recover.

If the operator has fresh eggs to work with and reliable machines, he can fairly reckon on a return of 75 per cent. on

fertile eggs; but this means, of course, that the utmost watchfulness must be exercised. One day's neglect will ruin all the eggs hatching. The incubator-room, then, is a serious tax, for, though it does not demand much actual time, frequent visits have to be paid to see that all is well.

As to prices, 8d. to 1s. a chick is usually obtained, though, of course, those lucky people who possess well-known strains ask, and obtain, a good deal more. Without giving an imaginary balance-sheet, it may be stated that the industry pays the operator for the time and trouble and expenditure involved, the only expenses after the initial outlay on incubators being for oil, advertising, and eggs.

CHARLES D. LESLIE.

FROM THE FARMS.

HAY-MAKING IN NORTHERN EUROPE.

IN the case of hay-making there is no doubt that the words *carpe diem* apply literally to such countries as Norway and

Iceland. In both places the short, fickle summers demand the greatest expedition in cutting and carrying the hay crops. In the former, considerable efforts are made to dry the grass before it is finally carried into large barns, and there stored for winter use. The mode of procedure is curious, and entails a good deal of labour. As soon as the grass is cut, large numbers of alder poles are carted on to the ground where it lies. A number of these poles, some 6ft. or 7ft. long, are then stuck in the ground at intervals of about 6ft., and are pierced with holes approximately 1ft. apart.

Each of these holes is filled with a wooden peg, and on these pegs are placed cross rails. The grass is then carried by hand and placed on the cross rails, commencing from the bottom, until the whole framework is covered. The general appearance then is that of long fences composed entirely of grass, which run parallel to each other across the fields. Once this is done, no more labour is required, since the whole crop is exposed to the action of sun and wind, and rain shoots off from it at once. Thus the Norwegians escape the laborious task of turning or tedding their hay according to the approved English style. In Iceland the term hay-making is almost a misnomer. Here the whole function resolves itself into cutting the grass, and carrying it almost immediately. Both these processes are carried out in a manner peculiar to the island. Owing to the rugged, irregular surface of the ground, and the sparse-growing patches of grass, we do not see the wide swathes mown with long-bladed scythes as is the custom in our own isles; but there the mower is armed



ICELAND PONIES.

with a curiously-shaped short-bladed scythe, with which he chops off the grass in a fashion similar to that of cutting it with a reaping-hook. The mowers are closely followed, usually by women, who rake the grass into heaps. Shortly afterwards it is bound into small bales with hemp or horsehair ropes; the bales are then slung on the backs of ponies, each pony carrying two of them. It is a curious sight to see the long lines of ponies wending their way back to the farms loaded with bales of hay. They are roped together, and walk in single file, the head of one pony being usually tied to the tail of the next in front of it. The hay, or grass—since it is generally quite green when carried—is then packed tight in low huts composed of turf sides, with roofs, the lower part of the hut being often dug out below the ground level, and a doorway left through which the cattle can enter. During winter months the cattle and sheep are allowed to feed their way solidly through the mass of fodder thus stacked in the huts. By this time it

must, in general character and quality, closely resemble ensilage taken from a silo. It is no uncommon occurrence in Iceland, by this quick means of cutting and carrying, to get two, or even three, crops of grass during the short Icelandic summer. The ponies are celebrated for their hardiness and strength, and as the islanders are universally a race of horsemen, it is seldom that men, women, or children are seen on foot when moving from place to place. A ludicrous spectacle may be witnessed as one of the sturdy little ponies comes ambling along, often at a fast canter, under the ponderous weight of some fair lady whose figure cannot be called sylphlike.

THE BACON TRADE.

The decrease in the supply of Irish and Danish bacon to England has been taken advantage of by the Canadians, who are now sending over bacon of the best description in large quantities. The supply from Canada has gone up from 78,138cwt. in the month of July, 1904, to 168,000cwt. in the same month of 1905. Canada was the only country from which an increased supply came, and but for the Dominion there would have been a serious



CARRYING HAY.

shortage. Danish and Irish mild-cured bacons were distinctly favourites, but the short supplies of these in the English markets have given a chance to the Canadians, who have not been slow in taking advantage of it, and the excellent quality of the Canadian cure is certain to be appreciated. The hogs in Canada are splendidly fed, milk and meal being their chief food, and little or no coarse, sloppy food, such as is given to them in Ireland. Amongst the trade it is felt that, Canada having got a good footing with her bacon, the English people will, in future, be induced to purchase it in preference to other cures. Danish bacon is said to be first-rate when used fresh, but it does not stand keeping. The Irish brands, which used to be so highly appreciated, are now cured up in such a hurry that the quality is, for the most part, deteriorated.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHINESE METHODS OF FISHING AND SNARING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The illustrations in your paper of September 30th, regarding the Chinese methods of catching ducks and fish, may, I think, be explained as follows: Flocks of ducks in large numbers frequent the rivers of China. The snarer, if we may so call him, having placed a hollow gourd over his head, or sometimes a basket, floats down the river till he gets into the middle of the flock, which he can often do, and once there it is an easy matter to pull the ducks down by their feet and slip their heads under his belt. As to the fish, I think it must relate to the flying fish, though I have not seen this fish in China. I have seen them often caught by placing a light in a boat—often a coal barge not in use. The fish flying at the light often drop into the boat. Sometimes a net is suspended in the boat to stop the flight of the fish. I cannot decide from your engraving if there are any lights shown, or if the scene is meant for night-time.—NAVAL OFFICER.

A BOWLING GREEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Could you or any of your readers kindly tell me whether a bowling green in an old-fashioned garden should be of any particular shape and size, and if so, what they may be? I should be grateful for any advice on the subject, as I have considerable space (shaded by large trees), which would not require much levelling.—CELLIO.

[We are not aware that there is any defined minimum or maximum space for a bowling green, the bowling, of course, being at the "Jack," wherever it may chance to lie after being thrown. We see them of all shapes and sizes. It is, however, almost essential that the ground should be absolutely level.—ED.]

BUTTER IN HOLLAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of October 7th I notice your reference to, and criticism of, *The Times* article on butter control in Holland. It may interest you to know that last season, during the existence of a direct service between Montreal and Rotterdam, considerable quantities of Canadian butter were imported for mixing with the Dutch product, the former being of much greater specific gravity. Our steamers were fitted with refrigerators specially for this traffic, and had the Line continued I have no doubt the business would have developed largely.—H. C. HARVEY, Late Manager Canadian Lines, Limited.

RASPBERRIES IN OCTOBER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I notice that a correspondent writes as to picking this fruit late in September. I picked 1½ lb. on Saturday, and there is quite a large crop coming on. We have now for some years picked this delicious fruit up to nearly the end of November, and shall hope to do so this year.—CHARLES W. MILLAR, Eastcote, Middlesbrough.

UNFORTUNATE HOUSE-MARTINS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The house-martins have had a very bad week of it here. They had assembled in large quantities for migration, but dared not face the boisterous winds. The cold weather by day and consequent absence of fly and the low temperatures at night have proved fatal to many. Every old nest has been packed at night. There are two nests within a few inches of my window, and I have counted as many as sixteen in one where the top of the nest has broken away. They always roosted with their heads inwards and their tails projecting out of the nest, and they appeared to lie two or three deep. Large numbers have taken refuge in the houses, and in many cases have been kept warm artificially during the night. One of the wards of a convalescent home here presented an extraordinary appearance, for some hundreds of martins entered by the windows and passed the night on the rafters.—BROADSTAIRS.

THE PRESERVATION OF BLACK-GAME.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have noticed more than one reference in your columns to the diminution in the number of black-game. This week, in your "Wild Country Life," you speak of the blackcock and grey hen as "destined to vanish from their ancient abiding places." If such is the case, I believe it to be entirely due to the young birds being shot, or rather butchered, in the first week or ten days of the season, and to the indiscriminate killing of cocks and hens alike. The result of another policy is here very evident. On September 14th, 1905, three guns killed here forty-five blackcocks (all of which at that date were, of course, fine birds) and three hens. Other bags within the few last years were: September 9th, three guns, thirty cocks, four hens; September 12th, three

guns, thirty-two cocks, two hens; September 2nd, three guns, thirty-five cocks one hen. If the very reasonable system here indicated was generally adopted there would be no reason to fear that this noble bird would become extinct, or even rare.—GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN, Wallington, Cambo, Northumberland.

OWLS AND PHEASANTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A brown owl would be very likely to come to a trap baited with any dead game, whether a pheasant or otherwise, especially if its attention were drawn by feathers scattered about. But this is no evidence that an owl would kill a pheasant nearly full grown, as I gather the one mentioned by your correspondent was. Neither could it in any case tear the wings off. They are far too muscular. There is little doubt that a cat was the culprit; the owl was merely picking the bones.—C. J. C.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your correspondent "E. P." in your issue of September 23, asks if any similar case to his is known. My keeper saw a brown owl take a young pheasant (when about the size of a blackbird) from near the coops in its claw and carry him away. For the past fortnight he has seen two of these brown owls in the covert, and after the young pheasants have gone to roost in the trees he constantly sees them so scared by these owls that they come down from the trees and run about in the covert. One well-grown pheasant has a wing broken, but he cannot say whether this has been done by an owl.—S. P. L.

TUFTED DUCK'S EGGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was considerably interested in Mr. Seton Gordon's note on wild life on a Highland loch (your issue of September 2nd). With all due regard, however, to his well-known accuracy, I should like to refer to his remark on "flushing a tufted duck from her cream-coloured eggs." These eggs must either have been quite abnormally coloured, or Mr. Gordon have mistaken the species. Some 150 to 200 nests of the tufted duck have come under my observation within the last year or two, and the variation in colour has been remarkably slight, the eggs being, as a rule, of a fairly decided coffee brown, paling to dirty oil green. In my opinion the green shade is never quite so decided as in eggs of the pochard, or in the green variety one occasionally finds in eggs of the pintail. I should be glad to hear from Mr. Seton Gordon on the subject.—NORMAN GILROY.

AVINE COLORATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There are very many curious facts of avine colouring that may be taken in connection with "L. G.'s" very interesting and suggestive letter in *COUNTRY LIFE* of July 15th on the special subject of the colouring of birds' eggs. One of the most suggestive notes is that on the hybrid egg showing some of the colouring of the male parent's egg. The more facts about colouring that can be brought into connection, the more prospect there is of finding the explanation and the law that we do not doubt to be forthcoming if we had sufficient insight; and, in possible connection with the subject of the colour of the eggs, I would point to certain curious instances of colouring in the birds themselves when young. A striking instance is to be found in the woodpecker family. The general tendency in this family is for the distinctive red mark on the head to become more vivid and large in proportion as the members of the family acquire more adult virility, the adult female showing more of it than the young, and the adult male than the female. The striking exception to the rule is the greater spotted woodpecker, in which the young bird has more of the red on the head than either parent. Another curious freak of immature colouring is to be seen in the crossbill family. In the parrot crossbills the male is of the crimson-tinged colour about the head, which is also the colour of the headgear of the common crossbill. The female of the parrot crossbill is of a kind of olive green on the head, whereas the female of the common variety is more or less similar to, though far less vivid than, its spouse about the head. The young of the common kind, however, has an olive green head that is almost exactly the same in hue as the head of the female of the parrot crossbill. Are we to infer then that the olive green is the head colour of the primitive type, as we so often find types of a more primitive kind in the immature specimens of many of the animal kingdom? Or can we infer nothing at this stage? That probably is by far the more prudent plan—to note facts, see whether connections can be traced between them, and so work patiently at the foundations in hopes of a superstructure to be raised in the future. A very singular case of coloration is quoted by Mr. Harting in his "Handbook of British Birds." A pied hen blackbird which frequented the same garden for four consecutive years became whiter in plumage each year. I might say with regard to the crossbills that some are disposed to consider the "parrots" only a larger variety of the common; and their comment on the difference in the females of the two kinds would probably be that the female of the parrot crossbill had not been sufficiently identified, and that the so-called olive-headed females were really young ones. But though so rare in this country, the bird is common enough for ample identification in Northern Continental Europe, and most ornithologists are quite satisfied that the two kinds are distinct.—HORACE HUTCHINSON

BIRDS AND FRUIT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think that it was in a recent number of *COUNTRY LIFE* that I read a letter from a fruit-grower, complaining that the birds ate up all his fruit—a letter that touches the heart even of a bird-lover like myself. It may interest you and your readers to know that the Fish and Game Commission of the State of New Jersey issued, some ten years ago, a handbook of the birds of the State, whether residents or migrants, and that one chapter in this book gave instructions to farmers and fruit-growers what to plant to attract the birds from the fruits which it is desired to protect. I give one item as a sample: "To protect raspberries and blackberries (July and August) plant mulberry, buckthorn, elder, and chokeberry." A picture in

the latest number of *COUNTRY LIFE* received here, showing the swallows on the telegraph wires, might have been taken here but for the difference in the poles. Our most numerous variety, the tree-swallow, breeds further north than this, but as early as July the birds begin to come southward, arresting their migration at what are known as the Newark or Hackensack Meadows, lying just west of the ridge on the west side of the Hudson, opposite the city of New York. From these meadows, where they spend the nights, they spread during the day all over the country to the westward. Increasing in



STABLES AT STRA—EXTERIOR.

number from July into the autumn, but finally disappearing about the middle of October, these tree-swallows, with smaller numbers of three of our other five varieties, may be seen during the day either on the wing or resting on the wires. This arrested migration is, to bird-lovers here, a very interesting fact. I intended, before referring to the swallows, to say that it ought to be possible to have prepared and distributed, for the benefit of British farmers, a handbook similar to that issued by this State.—ROBERT BARBOUR, Montclair, N.J.

FACES OF ROOKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of September 30th, under the heading of "Some Facts about British Birds," Mr. W. P. Pycraft in his most interesting article alludes to the bare faces of adult rooks. He doubts whether the delving habit of these birds accounts for the absence of feathers and moustaches on the faces of the adult birds. Now, Sir, there are two adult rooks in the Eastern Aviary in the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park: one an albino aged three years, whose face feathers and moustache are well developed, the other, deposited recently, a dilapidated-looking bird, having just moulted, but the moustache is well developed, and there is a sprinkling of face feathers. These birds I imagine do not delve; in the first place, because their food lies on the surface of the ground, and, secondly, I take it that the floor of the aviary is sufficiently hard to defy their attempts should they endeavour to indulge their delving propensity. I think that these facts support the original theory.—L. A. DUNN.

PERVERTED INSTINCT IN SWANS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with interest the correspondence in recent numbers of *COUNTRY LIFE* on instances of alleged perverted instinct in birds. There is no doubt that such cases do occur, and, as I think, are often equivalent to temporary insanity in human beings. But it is not often that this perversion can be regarded as a constant factor, as in a very bad case which, in the language of science, I have "had under observation" for some time. The culprits in this instance are the two Chiswick swans, which for many years have nested, often unsuccessfully, on the Eyot. There are many difficulties in their way. Food is scarce, the tides show a difference of some 8ft. between high and low water, and the birds are a good deal disturbed when nesting. But their domestic history is bad, and grows so much worse that I am compelled to give some details. By your kind permission I was able to write an account in the summer before last of how we brought up by hand one of three cygnets, which they allowed to roll off the Eyot into the mud at low water, without its occurring to them to try to rescue the young one from being smothered. This charming little pet, which gave a great deal of trouble to rear in the early stages of its existence, became as tame as a cat, and developed good sense—out of all proportion to the brain-power of a grown-up swan—when it was only six weeks old. When it was about half grown we restored it to its parents; after making a fuss over it for

about an hour, and giving it a warm welcome, the cock swan changed his mind, and proceeded very deliberately to drown it. It was rescued with some difficulty, and under the impression that, perhaps, it was not large enough to impress the swans, as it was hatched late, and being certain that it could not escape if they attacked it again, we borrowed a much larger cygnet from one of Sir J. Thornycroft's wild broods on Bembridge reclaimed harbour, and put it on the river with the old swans. These, after swimming about with it for a short time, decided to kill it, and would have done so had it not also been rescued. Both cygnets were taken down later to the Isle of Wight, and the larger cygnet was returned to its parents and family. The parents decided to kill it, and would have done so had it not escaped up an arched channel under a bridge. This makes two cases of criminal neglect of children, and three of attempted murder, on the part of two pairs of swans. The little cygnet grew into a swan, a most intelligent creature, and was brought back to Chiswick, where it unfortunately died, regretted by all who knew it, except its unnatural parents. I now come to the most discreditable part of the story of the latter. This year, after their sitting in the most exemplary way on their first nest, some thieves stole their eggs. They then made another nest among thick osiers, and to our delight one day the hen emerged with two little cygnets sitting on her back. These grew rapidly, and I was hoping to see them on my return to this house; but the swans were alone. On making enquiries, I learnt that a fortnight before my return they deliberately set upon their two children, and drowned them close to the new County Council pier on the old Upper Mall at Hammersmith. These swans will get no free breakfasts this winter. But I fear that they are not singular in their cruelty to their children. It would be interesting to know whether other readers can quote similar instances. I may add that while the cygnet was being hand-reared it was more than once shown to the parents, who made the usual noise with which swans call their young ones, and obviously recognised it as their own.—C. J. CORNISH, Orford House, Chiswick Mall.

THE MOST PALATIAL STABLES IN THE WORLD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The Palace of Stra, on the Brenta Canal, is but little known to travellers, yet it well merits a visit. Permission to view the building and gardens is obtainable at the Ducal Palace at Venice, and the journey is an interesting one for the sake of the glimpse it gives of a locality once much frequented by the great Venetian families whose ruined villas border the Brenta Canal for many miles. Little is left now to testify to their former importance, save here and there a fine pair of gateposts or a tasteful loggia; but the Palace of Stra, being now a national monument, is carefully preserved, and a certain amount of restoration is going on where necessary. The palace was built in 1720 for the Pisani family, and in 1807 it was



STABLES AT STRA—INTERIOR.

purchased by Napoleon for Eugène Beauharnais. The stables are probably the most magnificent in the world. From the outside they resemble a palace; within they are fitted up with marble columns and beautiful statues of horses, a couple of which adorn each stall. No two horses are alike, and their various attitudes are wonderfully lifelike and spirited. Stra is reached from Venice by steamer to Fusina, whence a steam tramway runs in connection along the banks of the Brenta Canal. The expedition can be easily made in a day from Venice.—A. LE B.